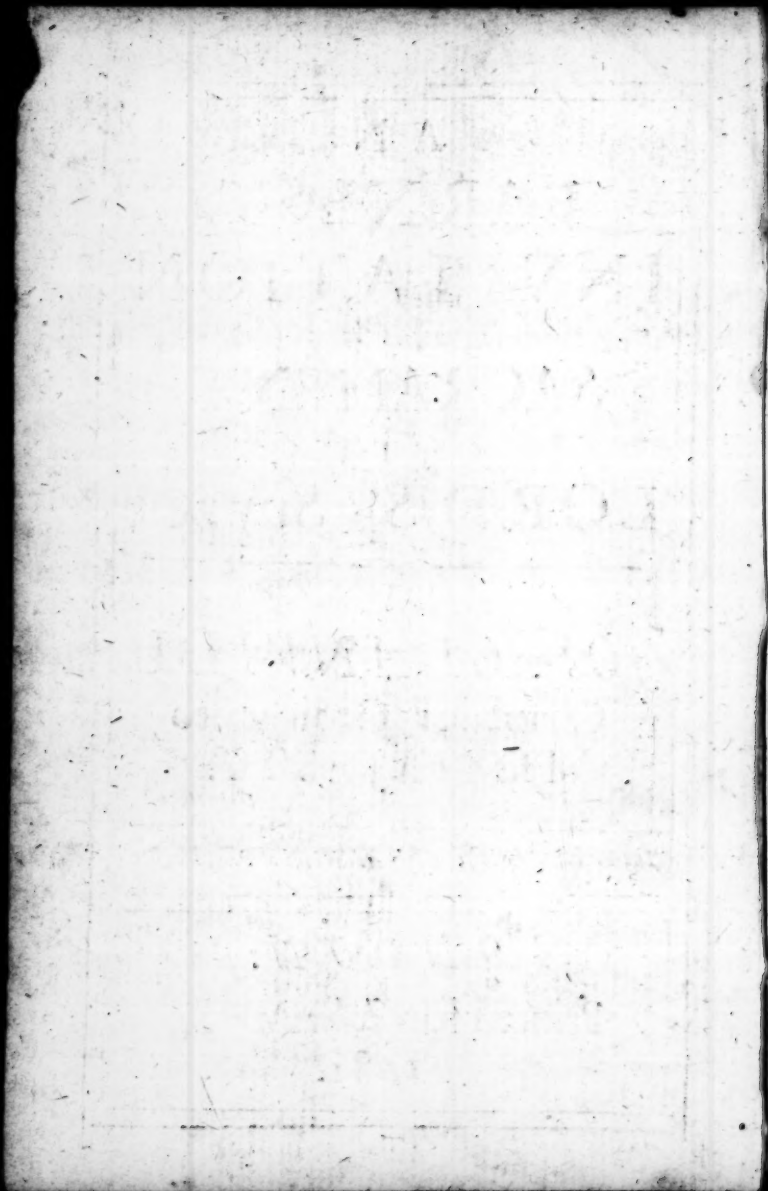


AN
EARNEST
INVITATION
TO THE
SACRAMENT
OF THE
LORD'S Supper.

BY
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Chaplain in Ordinary to
His MAJESTY.

The Fourth Edition: with Additions of Prayers, &c.

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T O T H E
Right Reverend Father in God,
PETER,
Lord Bishop of
BATH and WELLS.

MY LORD,



*Address the first
Edition of this
little Book to
Your Lordship
when You were newly decla-
red Bishop of this Diocess;*

A 3 and

The Epistle

and what I then writ was
to congratulate Your Lord-
ship, and to signifie how
happy I esteemed this Cler-
gy and People, in such a
relation: Your Lordship hath
now govern'd several years
among us, and fully an-
swer'd the expectations of
those that knew You, and
the desires of those that did
not, in the wisdom and
justice of Your manage-
ments; so that at this time
Acknowledgments are more
proper than Congratulati-
ons;

Dedictory.

ons; and particularly, we
ought with humble thank-
fulness to own Your Lord-
ships care and zeal for the
great Interest of the Church,
and Religion that I press
in this Discourse, the success
of which hath been very
encouraging, and particu-
larly in this place, where
among about 1100 Com-
municable persons, Inhabi-
tants of the Three Parishes
within this City, I gave
the Sacrament this last
Easter to above 800 of
them.

The Epistle

them. I pray God to continue, and to increase this number ; Through his grace and help I hope to give yet a better account of the regularity of this People. -

I writ the Discourse for their use, and it had gone no further if I could have got Transcripts enough for them: in defect of such, I committed it to the Press, and understand since that God hath blest these poor endeavours in divers other places with success, much
be-

Dedictory.

beyond my expectations.

I have often thought since of writing other little Manuals, concerning Hearing, Prayer, Meditation, and such like, chiefly for the needs of those of mine own charge, with reference also to a more publick benefit; but my great and constant business of preaching twice a week, and attendance every day, and almost every hour of it, on the Church, or other services of his people, will not hitherto permit.

These

The Epistle

These are Times in which our utmost diligence is necessary, not only for the reducing the Mised on the one hand, but for the exciting the Cold, and unconcern'd on the other: and 'tis hard to say from which the Church hath suffer'd more, either the mistakes of Zeal, or the want of it. We, Your Lordships Clergy of this Diocess, besides the other Common considerations of Duty, and Spiritual rewards, have the Incentives of Your Lordships

Dedicatory.

ships encouragement and example, and if we are remiss; our negligence will be inexcusable, and our guilt will be aggravated by our privilege.

My Lord, I pray God give You further success in Your pious endeavours for the good of this poor, broken, and divided Church; and make all the Ministers of it, faithful, and industrious in their great, and most honourable Calling; that we may gain the favour and approbation

The Epistle, &c.
*bation of God; and there
'tis no matter how we are
treated, or thought of by
perverse, and sensual Men.
So ever prayeth,*

My Lord,

Your Lordships

Most faithful and
most obedient Servant,

JOS. GLANVILL.

T O T H E
PEOPLE of my Charge.

My dear Neighbours,

Although *We* of the publick Ministry cannot expect to do *much* by our periwassions and endeavours, in such an Age as *this*; Yet we ought to persevere in our work with Courage and Resolution, and not suffer our selves to be overborn by any difficulties, or discouragements whatsoever: For Duty belongs to us, but Events unto God, who will reward the Laborers whatever be the success of their Labours. And as every Minister of Religion ought to be Active, and resolved in the *Work* and *patience* of the Gospel; So he shall then best acquit himself in it, when he studies the *proper needs* of the Age, and p^race wherein he lives,

B

and

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and accordingly directs his endeavours to provide for them. Now there is nothing, that I know, that is wanted more in our Days, than a due sense of the necessity and advantages of the *Holy Sacrament* of the *Lords Supper*, the general neglect, not to say contempt, of which, hath, I am perswaded, been a great and sad occasion of the debauchery, and divisions that are amongst us, and I verily think, that there could not be a more effectual means to reduce us to *Sobriety* and *Union*, than a frequent and reverend use of that divine Institution. From this perswasion I have earnestly, and often (as you can bear me witness) press'd this great duty upon your Consciences, and affectionately recommended it to your practice. I have represented its *Nature* with all possible plainness, and urged its *Necessity* with a *Vigour* in some measure suitable to so great an occasion; I have told you the *danger* of willful neglect

to the Lords Supper.

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lect on the one hand; and the *benefits* of due performance, on the other; But, notwithstanding all, there are too many of you, that seem yet insensible, and unconcerned. I have publickly desired those that are either *ignorant* or *dissatisfied*, to accept of my private help, and Instruction, and have offer'd them the utmost of my assistance for their better information, and direction. And after all this, I know not what I can do more to serve you in this great interest of yours, except I put something into your hands that may be ever with you, and that you may consider on all occasions. *Publick Teachings*, by word of mouth, are too much looked upon as *customary exercises*, and on that account, they lose their force with *some*; and the greatest part even of the better Auditors cannot keep their minds so close, and intent, to a Discourse *spoken*, as to receive it in its full evidence, and power; or though

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the hearers are never so diligent, and careful, our words are forgotten quickly, and the affections that they raise, vanish without any considerable effect upon their wills. For which reasons I have resolved upon this Course, to cast some of the plain things I have preach'd concerning the *Holy Sacrament* into writing; That those who are unfit for that great duty by reason of *Ignorance*, may have the properest means of Instruction that I can provide for them, always in their power, and when they please, before their eyes: And that those that *deprive* themselves of the Benefits of this most excellent Ordinance, by reason of the *Mistakes* of their erring understandings; may also have the most suitable help I can give, towards the setting their minds right, and the reconciling them to their Privilege, and their Duty.

For these purposes, I shall (as my manner is) represent what I have
have

to the Lords Supper.

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have to say, in the most *distinct* and *easie* way I can contrive, avoiding all things that are *hard*, either in *notion* or *expression*; And strive, as near as is possible, to speak all along to the most ordinary understandings. For I look upon *plainness* as the best dress for Truth, and my great care and endeavour, constantly is, to be *understood* by *all*, as far as the subject will bear.

In the pursuit of what I intend, I mean, by Gods help, to proceed in this order.

(1) I shall discourse with all convenient brevity, and plainness, the *Nature* and *design* of the *Lords Supper*; and

(2) Give the *General Reasons* to inforce the Duty; under which head, I shall apply my self to two sorts of *Refusers*, *viz.* Those that neglect (1) on the account of pure *carelessness*, and *stupidity*, and (2) Those that stand off upon the score of *mistakes* of *Conscience*.

In treating with the former, I

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shall shew that their obstinate refusal takes off all pretence they can have to Christianity, and puts them into the state of Infidels and Heathens; yea into a worse condition, than *that of meer unbelievers*. As to the other sort, *viz. the dissatisfied in Conscience*, I shall consider their *Reasons against Communicating* according to the way of our Church, and shew that they are no *justifiable grounds*, why they should refuse to joyn with us in that solemn part of Christian worship.

C H A P. II.

I Begin with the *First*, The *Nature* of the *Lords Supper*. Concerning *this*, there hath been an infinite diversity of Opinions, and disputes; The effects of which differences have been much *Noise*, and many *Tumults*, *Schisms* and
Wars,

to the Lords Supper.

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Wars, with a vast heap of mischiefs, and calamities to the Christian World: I shall not therefore trouble you with any thing of needless controversie, or notion, on this argument; but state it so far only, as it relates to *practice*; And I shall take all I have to say about it from the *Word of God*, the best Rule to guide us in the Enquiry. And if *disputing* Men would have been content with *its* declarations in this matter, all the trouble, and mischiefs had been avoided. But this hath been the misery; some govern their thoughts of this Holy Institution by corrupt and *novel Traditions*, and others by meer vain and *arbitrary phancies*; Yea, Those who have been right in the main, have yet so mingled the plain truth with *allusions*, and spoken of it in such a *phantaetical*, and *uncertain* way, that ordinary understandings have been confounded, and those that are for down-right sense, without the mixtures of

B 4 imagina-

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imagination, have not been able to tell what to make of *that*, which they heard described in such a phan-
ciful, and various fashion. This par-
ticularly hath been my own case;
I had heard men preach so humour-
somly, and so diversely about the
Sacrament; so much out of their
own heads, and so little out of
the *Oracles* of God, That I was
quite bewildred and lost, and come
at last to that pass, that I *knew*
nothing at all of it, which ignorance,
and confusion of thoughts, was the
natural effect of such discourses;
For when men once ramble in the
way of *phrases*, *metaphors*, and
conceits, as they lose themselves,
so they perfectly dazle, and amaze
those others, whom they should
instruct. I therefore betook my
self to the *plain expressions* of *Scripture*
concerning this matter; in
them I found an easie account of the
nature, and design of this divine
Ordinance. And whither shall we
go to enquire after it but to the
words

to the Lords Supper.

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words of *Institution* themselves? These I shall consider *first*, and then gather together those other passages of Scripture, which tend to the further explication of it.

1. The words of Institution are *Mat. 26. [Take, Eat, This is my Body. v. 26. and Drink ye all of it. For this is my Blood of the new Testament, v. 27, 28.]* To which is added in the Gospel of *St. Luke [Do this in Remembrance of me.] Luke 22. 19.* These words I shall severally explain, and then infer from them what is the *nature*, and *design* of the holy appointment.

Take, Eat, This is my Body — and, **This is my Blood** — Here I take notice,

That **Body**, and **Blood**, do not relate to the *Bread*, and *Wine*, But to the *Actions*, *Eat* and *Drink*, as appears plainly in the

* Original. 'Tis not *this* * *Tete*, not
Bread, and *this Wine*, are *Sto*.
my *Body* and *Blood*, but

B 5

this

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*this Sacramental eating and drinking of it. In this Christs body and blood, viz. His Incarnation, and sufferings are represented to us. And yet by a Figure, the consecrated Elements may be call'd his body and blood also; so the Form at the eating the Paschal Supper was, This is the bread of affliction which our Fathers did eat in Egypt; Not the very same, but a Memorial of it, and the State of Bondage from which they were delivered. Thus 1 Cor. 10. 3, 4. Manna is called spiritual bread, and the Rock spiritual drink, and that Rock Christ: Not that they could possibly be so in the Letter, but they signified that spiritual food, and were tokens of Christs Presence. And thus the Sacramental Bread, and Wine, may be call'd his Body and Blood, that is, Figures and Representations of them; and that, not barely of his sufferings, but (as the * Father Basil. notes) of all the Mysteries*

to the Lords Supper.

II

of the Incarnation which are *signified* and *included*. Thus anciently the Elements were call'd, *Figures*, *Symbols*, *Images*, *sensible things* instead of *spiritual*, and we know 'tis in common use to call the *Picture* by the name of that it represents, as *this is a Man*, and *that a Bird* or *Beast*. So that there is no ground for the Doctrine of *Transubstantiation*, in these words, as the *Roman Church* pretends. But I wave disputes and come to the next expression to be consider'd.

[*This is the New Testament*, or * *Covenant in my Blood*] viz. The * *Διαθήκη*.
Sign, and *Seal* of the *Covenant* made in his *Blood*; a *Covenant* wherein God engageth to bestow on us *pardon of Sin*, and *Eternal Life*; and we promise *faithful* and *sincere obedience*. Thus in the eldest times, *Eating*, and *Drinking* were *Covenant Rites*: as we
may

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may see in the compacts between *Isaac* and *Abimelech*, *Gen.* 26. 30. and between *Jacob* and *Laban*, *Gen.* 31. 44, 46. So that the Sacrament is not a *bare Sign*, but 'tis the *Seal* of Gods gracious *Covenant* made with us in his Son.

[**Do this in Remembrance of me**] It hath always

been usual to commemorate, and remember Benefactors and great Mercies by *Feasts* and *Festivals*.

The Heathens had their *

* *As 'Asáxeta*
 & *'Aidy'tez.*

Feasts in memory of their *Heroes*; And the *Passover*, a

Type of *this Supper*, was appointed to preserve the memory of the *Israelites* deliverance out of *Egypt*. *Exod.* 12. 14. The *Lamb* was eaten with *bitter herbs*, to commemorate the *bitterness* of their servitude; the *Red wine* was a Remembrance of their blood which *Pharaoh* spilt; and the *unleavened bread*, to remember them, that they

to the Lords Supper.

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they carried such out of *Egypt* at their departure: and thus our blessed Saviour hath appointed this *holy Rite* to imprint upon us the *memory* of what he hath *done* and *suffered* for us that we might not forget our Deliverance by him from a bondage greater than *Egyptian*.

And now from *these* main passages thus explain'd 'tis easie to infer, That

The Sacrament of the Lords Supper is a Memorial Feast, appointed for a solemn Remembrance of Christ our Lord; and a Seal of the Covenant that God hath made with us in him.

Two things then it is principally designed for, (1) to *Remember* us of our Lord, and Saviour, and (2) to be a *Seal* of the *Covenant* of Grace. Of each briefly.

(1) 'Tis for a Remembrance, not
only

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only of his *Person*, or only of his *Sufferings*, or any other particular part of his *Ministry*; but we are by it required *thankfully* and *affectionately* to call to mind, *All* that he hath *done*, and *all* that he hath *suffer'd*; His *Life*, *Doctrine*, and *Laws*; His *Passion*, *Resurrection*, and *Ascension*; His *Victory* over *Sin*, *Death*, and *Hell*; and the *gracious Covenant* that God hath made with us through him: *These* are all included in his *Body* and *Blood*, (as I intimated before,) of which the Holy Sacrament is a *Sign*, and *Memorial*: And the remembrance of *these*, which we are call'd to by the *Divine Institution*, is not only some *slight*, and *passing* thoughts, but a *solemn* and most *serious* fixing of them upon our minds, in order to the inflaming our affections with love, and our wills with resolution, that we may live answerably to that excellent Religion of the Holy Jesus which we profess.

(2) 'Tis the *Seal* of a *Covenant*,
[The

[*The new Testament in my Blood*]
 The Covenant is, That God will give pardon of Sin, and eternal Life, upon the conditions of Faith and Repentance. This He seals to us in the Sacrament, and assures us, that he, for his part, will make good his Promises, and we on ours, seal, that we will endeavour to perform the conditions. So that the Lords Supper is a Sacrament by which we confirm those engagements we are entred into at Baptism. Then our Sureties undertook for us, that we should be faithful in the Covenant; and in this holy Ordinance we take all those obligations upon our selves, and in our own persons promise to act according to them.

This plainly, and in short, is the nature and design of the Holy Sacrament; concerning which, there are some other expressions in Scripture, which I shall consider briefly, in order to the further explication of the sacred Mystery. The chief are these.

'Tis

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'Tis called (1) The Cup of blessing, 1 Cor. 10. 16. (2) The Communion of the Body, and Blood of Christ, 1 Cor. 10. 16. and in the duty 'tis said (3) That we shew the Lords Death, 1 Cor. 11. 26.

(1) The Cup of Blessing, viz. of Praise and Thanksgiving. Our Saviour Math. 26. gave thanks when he took the Cup. The Jews used to conclude their Paschal Supper with a Cup of Wine, at which time they sung an Hymn, and therefore call'd it the Cup of *

* Ποτήριον
ὑμνήσεως, &
εὐλογίας.

praising and * blessing. And the Heathens also after their Feasts had their * Cups of Praise to their

* Αγαθὸν
δαίμον. &
διδὸς Σωτῆρ.

Gods; which some take to be the Cup of Devils mention'd by the Apostle, 1 Cor. 10. 21. So that by

this we are taught to remember our Lord at his Table with praise and grateful acknowledgments: And therefore the Ancients from hence call'd the Lords Supper, the Holy

to the Lords Supper.

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Holy Eucharist, namely, a Feast of Thanksgiving, and the Solemnity was always attended with an hymn of Praise.

(2) **Communion,**
(or * Communication) Κοινωνία.

of the body and blood

of Christ, viz. The Sacrament is a sacred Rite in which God communicates, and imparts to all worthy Receivers, the Benefits of Christs Incarnation, and Sufferings. He doth then ratifie, confirm, and solemnly exhibit them, to those that duly attend upon that Divine appointment.

(3) **[As often as ye eat—
ye do shew the Lords death]**

viz. (1) Declare unto men, with joy and glorying, that we believe he dyed for such purposes, and that he hath procured inestimable benefits for us by his Death. That therefore we will adhere, and stick unto him; and that neither death, nor life shall separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.

And

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And (2) Imports our shewing and declaring *this* also unto *God*, and pleading it with him for his *pardon*, and his *grace*, for the sake of that meritorious Passion which we set forth, and commemorate. These passages fall under the account I have before given of the Ordinance, and shew *how* we are to *Remember* our Lord in it, and *what* we may expect in so doing.

Thus briefly of the *Nature* and *design* of the Sacrament, I might have run the matter into a large Discourse, but I resolve on brevity. In what I have said, you will find all things that are *necessary* and *essential* to the *Ordinance*; For the *niceties* and *disputes* that are about it, you need not trouble your selves with them; But so *much* of it as I have represented (I mean in the substance of the particulars) 'tis fit you should know: And therefore I intreat you, especially those of the more ordinary understandings, to return back and fix your thoughts a while upon

upon those periods; and read them over and again, till you have a *clear* and *distinct* apprehension of the Subject they explain. I know the thoughts of most are very *confused*, and much in the *dark* about it, and while they are *so*, they cannot demean themselves as they ought in the performance of the Duty, nor receive those benefits that otherwise they might from it. I beseech you therefore not to content your selves with a *single*, and *running* reading; Many Divine Truths will not enter into our minds at *first* sight; or, if they do, they are gone as soon as they are received: Though they are never so *plainly* exprest, yet they many times *seem dark*, till we look again, Or though they strike our minds fully, yet they pass out of Memory, except we reflect, and think them over; I hope therefore you will do your selves this right; And I thus urge you to consideration of my accounts, not as if I fancied I
had

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had made any *discoveries* in them which were not made before; (No, *These* are known things among the Intelligent sort of Christians) But I do it, because I speak to the *meaner*, and *less improved* understandings. And perhaps from the Representation of the affair which I have given, the *others* also may receive the advantage of a clearer order, and method to their thoughts, and be deliver'd from many *unnecessary* and *uncertain notions* that they have imagined to be of great consequence to be believed and known, when either they are not *true*, or not *considerable*.

CHAP.

CHAP. III.

I Come now to the main thing I design, *viz.* (II) To *urge* this great duty which I have thus explain'd, and to do what I can to perswade you, to the consciencious practice of it. Now there are two things that commonly oblige men to action, namely, Considerations of **Duty**, and of **Interest**. And there are *both* here, in the highest degree, to engage us. I shall discourse of each.

(1) We have the Motive, and Reason of **Duty**, and *Duty* in *such* circumstances, as have the greatest obligation in them. A *Lord*, who hath all *right* to our obedience both by *nature*, and by *dear purchase*, hath *commanded* us to do *this*. And, A *Saviour*, who hath rescued us from the Jaws of Hell, and Death, and hath procured for
us

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us endless life and glory ; hath required it of us. Here is the *Authority of just Power*, and the *Obligation of astonishing Love*. We are bound by the *submissions* we owe a *Sovereign Lord*, and by the *gratitude* we owe an adorable *Benefactor*. The *Son of God*, the *King of both the Worlds*, The *Redeemer of Men*, 'tis *He* that *commands*, and his *Commandements* are not *grievous* ; had he put upon our necks a yoke heavier than the *Jewish ceremonies*, had he injoyn'd a greater number of *costly and laborious Rites* than those, and required so many of such *services* from us, as would have taken up *all our time*, and *employed all our strength*, and wearied *all our powers* ; Yet these we ought to have observed without *repining*, and thought all but *small homage* to his *Greatness*, and *small acknowledgment of his Love*. *All these* had been *nothing* in compare with what he hath done for us *freely* without *merit*, or *obligation* ; *Nothing*, to his

his leaving the bosome of the Father, and the glories of the upper world, and the Hallelujahs of the blessed; *Nothing*, to his descending to a world of Infamy, and woe; *Nothing* to his suffering the scorn and contradictions of Sinners, the Death of the Cross, and the wrath of God: so that we had been wretchedly ungrateful should we have stuck at any of *these*, or as much as *murmured* at them: But our Lord hath not given us any such tryal of our Love, and obedience; He hath deliver'd the world from the Yoke of Ceremonial bondage, And (besides *Baptism*) hath appointed but *this one Rite* for us to observe; A *Rite*, that is neither *troublesome*, nor *costly*, *tedious*, nor *laborious*. And what Prodigies of baseness shall we make our selves, if we refuse to take notice of this his *gracious* Institution? With what face can we look up and call our selves by his name? How shamefully are we upbraided by the practice

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Etice of *those* we count *barbarous*?
 Let us look abroad into the world
 and consider the most *brutish* *Idola-*
ters; They will *cut* their beloved
flesh, and *burn* their dearest children,
 and sometimes, suffer themselves to
 be *crush'd to death* by the Carriages
 that bear their *Idols*, because their
Infernal Gods require, and are plea-
 sed with, such testimonies of their ho-
 mage: Hath the *Devil* such *obse-*
quious servants? Are those *Cruel*
Rites, which he appoints, observed
 with so much duty? Will those
 poor wretches do, and suffer any
 thing, rather than displease their *ug-*
ly *Deities*? And are we *Christi-*
ans, Professing Servants of the *Son*
 of God, our *Sovereign* and *Redeem-*
er, and do we neglect *this* his *main*,
just, and *gracious* appointment? Is
this too much to do for him? And
 do we owe him so much *less*
 than *Cannibals* do their *Idols*?
 Certainly those men of the *Desart*,
 those *wild Savages* of the Woods,
 shall rise up in *judgment* with such

a Ge-

to the Lords Supper.

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a *Generation* of pretending *Christians*, and shall condemn it. Me-thinks their *diligence* and *exactness* in those hard and painful services, should cover us with blushing and confusion at our carelesness and neglect of the easie duty our Lord requires from us: And we shall see great reason to be ashamed of our Omissions; if we consider,

That our blessed Redeemer had lived a life of *poverty* and *dishonour* for our sakes: He had instructed us in the way of Happiness by his excellent *Doctrine* and *Precepts*, and had gone before us in an incomparable *Example*; And now he was just about to compleat his *Love*, by offering himself unto *Death*, to deliver us from it, and thereby to give an Instance of the most amazing goodness that ever was: At this time he enjoyns his Disciples to do something in remembrance of him. And Lord! What is sufficient to be done in memory of such *Love*? Had he required the dearest of our blood,

C

and

An *Exhortation*

and the choicest of our substance to be offered to him in acknowledgment. Should we have thought such Demands unreasonable? Would ordinary ingenuity have scrupled to make those Sacrifices for such kindness? But he calls not for these, He looks for no first-born of our Bodies, not chief of our Flocks; No, He appoints only a Feast of Memorial and commands us to remember his Love in that. And shall we not observe him in so small a matter; Hath he not deserv'd to be remembered by us, or do we know any better way, to signify our remembrance of him, than that which himself hath prescribed? Should we not do as much as this, at the request of an ordinary dying Friend? And is not the greatest and the best that ever Creatures had, worthy of such a Testimony of Affection from us? I am sure there is no one can be so brutish as to deny the justness of the Duty, and me thinks none should be so unworthy

to the Lords Supper.

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as to refuse compliance with it. I beseech you therefore, if the *Considerations* of Duty can do anything with you: If there be any *Obligation* in the highest *Authority*, if there be any *Allurement* in the sweetest *Love*; if your *profession* of *subjection* to *Christ* be not only a *Complement*, and if he have any real interest in your Souls, give this proof then of your being in earnest; that, which you would be thought; refuse no more of his *Invitations*, neglect no more of his *Calls*; consider the *expressness* of his *Command*, and that this *Law* is *peculiarly his*: His in such a sense as (*Baptism* excepted) no other *Law* is. For his other *Injunctions* are but *Enforcements* of the *Laws* that *God* hath written in the *Old Scriptures*, and in our hearts; but this is his own proper *Commandment*; by obeying him in this, we particularly own him as our *Law-giver*, and by refusing, we renounce him.

But if the *Considerations* of Duty

C 2

should

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should not prove so powerful with you, there are others which generally use to be of more force, namely, *those taken from our interest.* And here,

(II) I desire you to consider the great *Benefits* that a worthy Communicant receives from the holy Sacrament. *This is not a meer barren Ceremony, or unprofitable Rite,* but an Instrument and means to produce and to convey unspeakable blessings to us. Here we receive

(I) *Confirmation of our Faith:* All habits are increas'd by being exercised, and this Ordinance requires great *exercises* of the Grace of Faith: For here we make a *Solemn Declaration* of it, and thereby bind it stronger upon our Souls. And to the exercise of this *Divine Grace*, and the sincere and publick profession of it, there is no doubt but God will superadd his special aid and blessing, that out of *weakness* it may be made strong. So that if your Faith be weak and trembling, if you are perplext

to the Lords Supper.

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perplexed with vexations, doubts, and temptations to unbelief, apply yourselves to this holy Ordinance as to the proper remedy. *Declare* your Faith, and *pray* for more. If you *believe*, God will help your *unbelief*; Mark 9. 25.

(2) Our *Repentance* will be heightened by our due Communicating at the Lords Table, and that in respect of all its great Acts, viz. 1. *Sense* and *sorrow* for Sin. 2. *Confession* of it; and 3. *Aversion* from it. For the first,

(1) The *evil* of Sin is never so well discerned as in its effects. It is *sweet* in the *mouth*, but *bitter* in the *belly*. And there is no greater evidence of its *vileness* and *malignity*, than *that* we have in the *sufferings* of our Lord, which are set before us in the Holy Sacrament. And certainly Sin must needs be an *accursed* thing (saith the considering Communicant) That the *Blessed Jesus* must thus be made a *Curse* for it; that is doubtless a *mighty evil*;

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that cannot be expiated but by the blood of God: And Sin, without question, hath unspeakable malignity in it, since it laid such a load of wrath upon the Shoulders of Omnipotence, as made him complain, and sweat, and groan, and die. The good man hath never such a sense of the evil of sin, as when he is awakened by the signs and images of Christ's Sufferings; and when he sees it writ in Characters of Blood. Besides, the baseness and ingratitude of Sin is made evident in all the Representations of the Divine Love which we have at the Cross. We see there, that it is an abuse of the greatest and most tender Goodness, and there is nothing that more affects ingenuous Souls; than the sense of such unworthiness, and this will beget the liveliest and most kindly sorrow. They shall look on me whom they have pierced, and they shall mourn; Zech. 12. 10. The tenderest grief ariseth from the apprehension of abused Goodness: And the

to the Lords Supper.

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the more ingenious Spirits are sooner brought to be troubled for their sins, by a sense of *Mercy* than of *Terrors*. Now there is nothing that gives a truer or greater Representation of *Divine Grace* and *Kindness*, than the *Holy Sacrament*, and therefore *this* is a very effectual means to beget and increase a *penitential sense* and *sorrow* for sin. And upon this

(2) Follows *Confession*, which is one expression of *this*: The apprehension of an *angry Majesty* drives a Sinner to *Desperation*, and prevents his *Confession*. When the Lord askt the Man in the Gospel with some severity, *How camest thou hither, not having a wedding garment*, he was *speechless* with *Terrors* beget stupifying fear, which stops the mouth, and dams up all the passages to and from the Soul, whereas the Discoveries of *Goodness* and *Mercy* open the heart, and melt the Seal upon the Lips: They invite *Supplications*, and beget *Confessions*

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and therefore the *Sacrament*, which is a *Memorial* of the greatest, sweetest, and freest Mercy, tends in the nature of it to the producing humble confessions and acknowledgments: And it doth it likewise

(3) As to the *Aversion* of *Repentance* by the same way. The top and perfection of *Repentance*, is to turn from our evil ways; God invites his People to this, by the Argument that is most powerfully press'd upon us in the *Sacrament*, namely, *That of his pardoning mercy and kindness. Return thou backsliding Israel,—and I will not cause mine anger to fall upon you; Jer. 3. 12.* His readiness to pardon is the great Motive to return, and the *Sacrament* is the *Seal* of the *Covenant* of *Pardon*. Despair of Mercy keeps men on in a sinful course. *Thou sayest there is no hope*, say they in the Prophet *Jer. 2. 25*. They thought their case desperate, and it follows, *I have loved strangers, and after them will I go.* The Devils

to the Lords Supper.

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Devils persist irreclaimably in their hatred of God and Goodness, because the unalterable Sentence is past upon them; And if men come once to quit their hopes of Happiness, they will also in a short time quit the thoughts of God and Vertue; and give themselves up to the swinge of their Apperites and Inclinations. Whereas on the other side, *Hope* is the great *Encouragement* and *Spring* of *Endeavour*, and where *this* is enlivened by a *full* and *quick* sense of pardoning Goodness, that Soul will feel a *mighty Motive* to reform and turn from Sin. Now the *Sacrament* is the *Seal* of that *Covenant* which assures us of Grace, and Pardon, and the firmest ground of our best hopes, and most glorious expectations. Thus the Grace of *Repentance* receives increase in all its *Exercises*, from this *Divine Institution*: and so doth,

(3) That other most excellent Grace, *Love*, both as it relates, 1. to God, and 2. to our Neighbour.

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(1) In

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(1) In the *Holy Sacrament* the *Mysteries of Divine Love* are unfolded in all their circumstances of Wonder. There we see *pardoning, redeeming, bleeding, dying Love*; Love, suffering for all our sakes; and Love procuring all things for our Interests, Love descending to the *Grave and Hell*, and Love triumphing over both: Love leading *Captivity captive*, and obtaining gifts for men, *Light, Life, and a Glorious Immortality*. Such Love, and Love beyond what we can say, and beyond what we can think, is represented at the *Holy Sacrament*, and this must needs fire every Soul that is not as cold as the Earth, and as dead as the Grave. Love begets love, and one Flame kindles another. And if we think of this Love, and consider it as we ought when we come to the entertainment of Love, this would excite our Affections, and turn our Souls into holy Flames, and so our dead Powers will live, and

and our dull sleepy affections will awake into new spirit and vigour: We shall live by Love, and act by Love, till we are received into the earnest Embraces of Love, and swallowed up in that immense Ocean of Love. Now Love is the best and most pleasing of all our passions; and Love to God is the best and most pleasant of all loves: A Love free from those Tortures and Disquiets, that shame and those Griefs that are produced by absence and uncertainties, loss, and guilt, when this Passion is placed upon other Objects. This Love is the Fountain of Delight, and the Spring of Action that sweetens our Troubles, and stirs up our Endeavours; that makes Duty agreeable, and Difficulties easie, that is a present Heaven, and the foretaste of a greater. This also

(2) Tends to the increasing our Love one to another. It is a Feast of Love at our Fathers House, and our Lords Table: The Guests are Brethren,

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Brethren, and professing Children of Love. Here are all the Engagements to love set before us: The *Love* of our *Lord*, and his express Commandment; *John* 13. 34. The *Relations* we stand in to God, and to one another. We cannot well chuse but pity our *Brothers Infirmities*, and pardon each others faults, when we see how much God hath pitied our *Miseries*, and how graciously he hath pardoned our *Offences*. Our *Animosities* will be abated, and our thoughts of *Malice* and *Revenge* will die. Our *Indifferences* will be *kindness*, and our *kindness Love*, when we consider the inexpressible *Love* of our common *Lord*, and the blessed effects of that love: *Reconciliation* made, *Happiness* procur'd, and *Sin* and *Death*, and *Hell* conquered: A sense of these will swallow up all our little picks and displeasures, and so fill us with the thoughts of *Gratitude* and *Love*: That we shall forget our *Enmities*, and imbrace

brace our Enemies, and shed abroad our kindness upon all about us, yea and extend it to all the World in prayers and good wishes. And now, this Spirit of Charity is a most divine temper, and a great happiness: 'Tis a sweet, serene, and pleasant thing, a Reward to its self, if there were no other: Whereas Envy and Malice, and all the degrees of them, are an Hell, and Torment to the Soul; they are great sins and their own punishment: And a right use of the Holy Sacrament will abate, and remove these, and therein also administer blessed and unspeakable Advantages to us.

(4) Our Hopes are nobly advanced and strengthened by this Ordinance: When the good man considers the Justice and Holiness of God, and the perfection of his Law; and then takes a view of his own sinfulness, and innumerable imperfections: His Spirits fail, and his Hope is giving up the Ghost; he sinks into Trouble, and almost into
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An Earnest Imitation

the Regions of Despair: Now all the Relief that a man can have in such a state, is to be drawn from Gods Covenant, and pardon sin, and to accept of Faith and Repentance instead of Perfection. This is the Tenour of the Gospel, and the Foundation of our Hopes; and *this Covenant is sealed and assured to us at the Sacrament*; so that thence the fainting Soul may derive life and quickning. And when the drooping Christian comes from seeing God putting his Seal to his Pardon, and to the Promises made him of Eternal Life; his Hopes recover, and his Spirits return unto him; his Soul leaps for joy, and all his powers are full of Content and Pleasure. And over and above this, God is pleased at such times especially, to vouchsafe more abundant Manifestations of himself to the Soul, sealing his love upon it, and giving it so much assurance as may deliver it from its unreasonable doubts and suspicions,

and

and make it in part partaker of our Masters joy. But this will be a particular by it self. Therefore

(5) The holy Sacrament is an excellent means to heighten a Christians Joy and Comfort. For there we are in a special exercise of our Graces, and by them are prepared for Divine peace and pleasure. That Peace of God which passeth all understanding; Phil. 4. 7. And this is something more than that content that naturally ariseth upon and results from the Actions of Holiness and Vertue, and is superadded by the nearer applications of the Spirit of God to the Soule. This pleasure and satisfaction God is always willing to bestow upon us, but we by our sins indispose our selves for it, and it is not to be given out but to prepared Soules. And now according to the greater or less degrees of our preparations, and exercise of our Graces, we shall have more or less of this spiritual joy and satisfaction in our Com-

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Communion. But besides the joy which is *special* and *extraordinary*, the *Ordinance* in its own nature tends to *delight* and *pleasure*. We had raised Storms and Tempests by our Sins, and provoked him whom we can neither resist, nor avoid: His Countenance was full of dread and terrors, and Death and Hell stood ready for the command to seize upon us: And must it not needs fill those with joy and transport, that were just now in this dreadful state, when they shall see the Heavens cleared, and the Storms gone, to behold smiles and love in the face of the offended Majesty; to be assured that he is *reconciled*, and his Arms are open to receive us: That *Hell* and *Death* are *destroyed*, and *Life* and *Happiness* procured for us? All these are set before us in the Holy Sacrament, and did we use it as we ought, our Souls would be transported with joy, and we should have a delightful foretaste of the happiness and triumph

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triumph of the Blessed, and all our Lives would be *Anthems of Praise* and *Acclamation* to the adorable Author and Procurer of our Blessings. And this

(6) Is another happy advantage we derive, or may do, from the holy Sacrament, *viz.* That it heightens and spirits our *Gratitude* and *Praises*. Praise and acknowledgments of *Divine Favours*, are all the Return we can make for them; and we are to offer up these *Sacrifices* for our selves, and all the other Creatures. But the *Commonness* of our Mercies takes away the *sense* of them, and we pass them over with *flight* and *customary* acknowledgments: This ordinarily is our course, and 'tis a very disingenuous and ungrateful carriage to the bountiful Author of our Beings and Blessings: But now at the Holy Sacrament, *Divine Favours* are *particularly* and *solemnly* represented, our remembrance awakened, and our affections excited; and the

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the devout Soul pours it self forth into holy Eucharist, and Thanksgiving. The Heart is full, and the Mouth flows; all the Powers rejoyce, and in rejoycing breaks forth into Songs of Praise: And so begins that blessed Employment, which shall be the Work and Happiness of Heaven.

Thus we shall receive Increase to our Graces; and our Comforts, from the frequent and due use of the Holy Sacrament, and all other spiritual advantages are contained under these. And as by these particulars we may encourage our selves to our duty, so in them likewise we may see how we are to demean our selves in the discharge of it: what acts we are to exercise, and by what considerations we may stir up our Graces, inflame our Affections, and strengthen our Resolutions.

And now the Benefits that I have represented to encourage and invite you to the holy Sacrament, do not only

only concern the *thorow* and grown Christian, but even all that own the Profession of Christs Religion, and have not renounc'd their *Baptismal Engagements* by *lewdness* and *impiety*: For such have some degrees of Faith, Love, Repentance, and other Vertues: But the unhappiness is, that these, in the most, are very low, imperfect, and in a degree that will not secure their condition: These Graces must be advanced to *nabler measures*, and to *such degrees*, as may prevail over the *contrary habits* and *dispositions*.

In the matter comes to this, we are under the Law and a spirit of bondage; in a condition of *impotency* and *weakness*, and not arrived to the glorious *Liberty* and *Power* of the Sons of God. This, all that profess the *Christian Faith* and *Hopes*, ought to aim at, and endeavour After, and the Sacrament is the most proper and likely means for the advancing of our imperfect graces to that noble height. So all that professing

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feeling Christians are concerned in the Duty, and capable of the Benefits. And to all those that have *such* thoughts, and *such* desires, the *Considerations* I have presented will be of moment. But for the rest that are *careless* and *unconcerned*, dead to *such* spiritual Motives, and *stupidly* *careless* of the duty and the privileges that attend it. They are *not* Christians, but do as much as in them lies, to renounce their Religion, and to put themselves into the condition of Heathens and professed Infidels. This is that I come next to discourse.

C H A P. IV.

After all my perswasions, and more earnest Endeavours, I have too much cause to think that some among you neglect the holy Ordinance, not for any reason that they

they have, or can as much as pretend, but from meer brutish stupidity and unconcernment. They care not for these things: the Motives of Religion and another World can do nothing with them; such considerations are not felt, but pass over their Souls without making any impressions on them. And now, as for such, I am come to shew, That they disclaim Christ and his Religion, and are by no means to be reckoned into the number of Christians. This I prove by the following particulars.

First, they renounce a main Article of the Creed, viz. *The Communion of Saints*, their Communion with (1) Christ, and their Communion with (2.) one another.

(1) Christ invites us to his Table, and provides a spiritual entertainment for us; and in that there is a solemn and special intercourse between him and his Church, which on our part consists

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sits in the exercise of our Graces, and on his, in the Benefits, and Blessings He bestows. He invites us to come and to meet him there, to enjoy spiritual correspondence, and communion with him: And now, wilfully to refuse the Invitation, is to signify our contempt of the Holy Jesus, and so declare that we care not for any nearness of correspondence with him. And such Neglecters in effect say, that they love the converse and communion of their vain and vicious company: That they can spend their time pleasantly in their conversation, upon an Ale-bench, or place of Idleness, or Debauches: But for Christ Jesus they like not his company, and care not for any intimacy or acquaintance with him. This is the direct language of such practices, and neglects; and what kind of Christians are such as these?

(2) They renounce the Communion of Saints one among another. The holy

holy Sacrament is the Feast of Cha-
 ring and Christian Love, and there
 our Affections are united to God,
 and to our Brethren. There we
 profess to be of one Body, one
 Society, and to be all Members one
 of another. So that those who neg-
 lect and refuse this holy Symbol
 of Love, break off from the So-
 ciety of Christians, and declare
 they will have nothing to do with
 them, as far as they are concer-
 ned in that Name and Relation:
 That they will not be of the Flock
 and number that Christ calls His,
 but would rather have their lot
 with the World, and Herd of
 Mankind, who are strangers to
 the Covenant of Promise, without
 hope, and without God in the world;
 Ephes 2:12. That they value not
 their Priviledges, nor care for their
 hopes. This is the meaning of their
 neglect, and such Christians are the
 wilful Refusers.

(1) They renounce their Baptism.

This

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This is the Sacrament of Entrance into Christianity, and here Engagements are laid upon us without our knowledge or consent. At the Sacrament of the Lords Supper we solemnly engage and take those Obligations upon our selves. If we refuse to do this, we withdraw our consent from what was done in our stead; we make our Baptism void, and put our selves into the state of Infidels and Heathens. The Indians were by the Spaniards driven to Baptism in droves like Cattel to the water, without knowing what it meant, or what they did in it: were these Christians by vertue of such a Baptism? Especially, is there any reason to think those of them such, who as soon as they were free, made open declarations against it. And are those among us Christians, who were signed with that Religion when they could not help it? and profess against it by their actions and neglects, as soon as they are in capacity to

to the Lords Supper.

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to do it; who *disown* it when they are *solemnly* called to put their *Seal*, and to declare their allowance and approbation? Their *Sureties* engaged for them that they should *believe* the *Christian Faith*, keep Gods *Commandments*, and *renounce* the *World*, the *Flesh*, and the *Devil*: But say *those* by their practice, what had *they* to do to undertake such things for us? we will stand to no such engagements: we are call'd on to make this good our selves in person at the other Sacrament, or by our neglects to declare it void: but we will not tie our selves, or own any such engagements upon us: we will leave our selves at large to believe what we please, and to practice what we phancy, and to gratifie and worship as long as we think fit, the *World*, the *Devil*, and the *Flesh* our Friends, and dearest Correspondents. All this likewise is plainly signified in the neglect of the Holy Sacrament; and therefore certainly such are no better
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Christians than the wild men of *America*; which will further appear, if we consider,

(3) That by it they deny the very profession of *Christ Jesus*; They will not so much as claim nor pretend to him, in any solemn significant way. To say that we are *Christians*, and now and then to hear a *Sermon*, these are not profession enough: They are but cold declarations of our *Opinion*, no good significations of our *Faith*. The right profession of *Christianity* is made, by our presenting our selves at the Lords Table, and owning our *Faith* there, that is a solemn and publick confession and acknowledgment. To hear Sermons is too often but curiosity or custom, to say we are of the Christian Religion, is but a declaring in what way we have been brought up; and meer *Education-faith* is but a faint unsignifying thing; it is but *Opinion*, and a low degree of assent. Tis true, a man may be a *Formalist* and an
Hypocrite

to the Lords Supper.

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Hypocrite when he comes to the Lords Table, as well as in other lower significations of his Religion. But however he makes a *profession*, and *that* which is proper and *solemn*: whereas the *wilfully negligent*, refuse to make any due confession of Christ and his Religion: They openly *deny him before men*, and *such he will deny before his Father which is in heaven*; Mat. 10. 33.

To withdraw from the *Profession* of Christianity in times of difficulty and persecution is a great sin; but 'tis such a one as admits of some *extenuation* from the *frailty of humane nature*, and the *temptations of fear and self-love*: But to *deny the profession of Christ* in times of *Liberty and encouragement*, this is an *affront to the Holy Jesus*, for which there is no *shadow of excuse*, and must arise from *contempt*, and a *confest neglect* of him. Such persons publish to the world, that they own *nothing of Religion*, but count it a *disparagement to be thought*

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any way concern'd for it. And so are by no means to be accounted Christians. Further,

(4) Their refusal and neglect is a quitting and renouncing the *whole Covenant* that God hath made with Sinners in his Son. The *Covenant* on *Gods part* offers *Grace* and *Glory*, and on *ours*, it binds to *Faith* and *sincere obedience*. We are called to the *Sacrament* to see God *confirming* what he hath promised, and assuring us to make good what concerns *him*: On the other side, we are to present our selves *there*, to profess our readiness and resolution, to perform *our part*, to keep the terms to which we were engaged, and upon which we expect the promised Blessings. Now if we wilfully refuse this *Confirmation*, we withdraw our selves from the *Covenant*, and declare that *Grace* and *Glory*, are things that we neither *care for* nor expect; and that we will not tie our selves to any *Faith* or *homage*; but would be as free as we

we can, to follow the *Devil* and our *Lusts*; and so are very far from being *Christians*.

CHAP. V.

I Have thus briefly shewn you what is *signified* and *implied* in the *neglect* of the *Holy Sacrament*. Many of you that are guilty of this sin, would I suppose be loath *openly*, and in *words*, to *renounce* Christ and his Religion; and yet while you continue in this obstinate, dangerous neglect, you *do it* as *fully* as if your Tongues declared against that Name and Profession. And I think when any such as *these* turn *Papists*, *Turks*, or *Jews*, they *do but* change to some *shew* of Religion, from none at all. So that it is no *real* disparagement, or loss to our Church, when those Infidels declare in *words*, what before they sufficiently signified by their *pra-*

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Etice. They go out from us, because they were never of us; 1 John 2. 19. They do not change their Religion, for they had never any before which they might exchange.

This, Sirs, in serious truth, is the condition of those that wilfully refuse and neglect the Duty of *Holy Communion*: And methinks it should make such tremble to consider, that they live in a *profeſt* and *impudent* contempt of God. You pity *Heathens* and ignorant *Americans*; but there is work enough for your pity at home, and their condition certainly is not worse than the condition of those careless negligent Sinners among our selves. Yea, the Apostle tells us, That 'tis better never to have known the way of truth, than after we have known it to turn away from the *Holy Commandment*; 2 Pet. 2. 21. And our Saviour saith, It shall be more tolerable for the dark Tyre and Sidon at judgment, than for the enlightned Capernaum and Bethsaida; Matth. 11. 22.

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We think their condition dreadful that say, *there is no God*, and no doubt it is so: And certainly their state is not *less* deplorable, That acknowledge *there is a God*, but *despise* him, and carry the matter so, as if in *good earnest* there were *no such being*. To live at large without the serious profession of *some Religion* is *brutish*, and *unnatural*: And such *Savages* deserve not to continue in the societies of *men*, but are fitter to range among the wild Beasts of the Woods: Such are those among us, that never make any solemn profession of *any Religion*, by *any act* of their own: They have *no Religion*, but that of their *Climate*, which they neither understand, nor mind: they are *Christians* by the *Christianity* of others; (*viz.* the *general profession* of their *Country*) or they are *none* at all; and if they live and die in this condition, *wild men* and *Cannibals* will at the last be in a *better state* than they.

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And now, Sirs, *Reason* for this *carelessness* and *dangerous neglect*, I am sure you have none; Nor do the sort I am now dealing with, pretend *Scruples of Conscience*: But some *Excuses* there are, (which you know are but *vain*) that you use upon occasion, to take off the edge of reproof, and to seem justified in the sight of men.

Thus they that were invited to the Supper in the Parable, *Luke 14. 18.* made *Excuses*; One had *bought Ground*, and he must see it; a second, had *bought Oxen*, and he must *try them*; and a third, had *married a Wife*, and *could not come*. None of these *pretences* had any good reason in them; they were *something* to say, and had a little colour, but they were not the *Causes* of their not coming to the Supper; No, the *true ground* was their *contempt* of the *Master*, and his *Invitation*: and therefore *Matth. 22. 3.* 'tis said, *They would not come*; Their *excuses* were looked on, as *flat deny-*

to the Lords Supper.

denials, and the Reason is given after: It was not their *Ground*, nor their *Oxen*, nor their *Marriage*; but their *disesteem* of the Lord, and his Feast, *They made light of it, vers. 5.* But though these excuses were not good, yet they had something *specious* in them: 'Twas *business*, and *considerable* occasions that were alledg'd: and *such* Affairs they really had; for 'tis said in St. *Matthew*, that *they went their way, one to his Farm, and another to his Merchandise*; so that there was something true in their *Pleas*, though the main thing for which they were brought, was *false*. But now, if they had sent word, that the *Lords House* was so far off, that they were not able to go to it, though really it were within some few Furlongs of their remotest dwellings, and no further than the *Market*, which they constantly frequented: There had been more folly in *this* excuse. If they had said, that there was not room for them all in the *Lords House*, when

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they knew, that it was never *full* on *such* occasions, and that a great part of those that were invited, would not come, so that they were sure to find too many empty places; the excuse would have been interpreted as a *Mockery*, and a *scoff* at the invitation. If they had told the Messengers, that they would not come, except they had each of them a *Chair* and *Cushion* provided for him, and might sit in *state* and *ease* at the Entertainment, this had been *greater* arrogance than appears in *those* Refusers. If they had sent the Lord word, that they would not feast with him, at *such* or *such* of his Houses, that were *appointed*, and were most *convenient* for their reception; but they would have it *here* or *there*; at *home*, and *next* door; in places much less fit. *This* would have been a very *humour*some and very *rude* Answer to the Invitation. If further they had said, that the Feast began too soon, and that

that they could not rise so early, though the Sun was up many hours before, and they were abroad every day earlier about their other Business: This also had been an Affront to the Master, and a contempt of his kindness. But if these surly, unworthy people should have been humour'd in all particulars, and things should have been so managed, as to have avoided all these pretences: and yet if after such condescension they should have refused, they had confuted themselves, and given the Lye to their Excuses. But, if notwithstanding all this, they should have cried out that they were perishing for want of Bread, and clamour'd and complain'd heavily, that Provision was not made for them: What could have been said to such an impudent brazen'd sort of Hypocrites.

Sirs, there are some among you that understand what I mean: I speak not thus out of ill will to upbraid

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upbraid any of you, but I ought to *mind* you, and to endeavour to *convince* you of your sins. What ever *colours* the *guilty* may set upon their neglects and contempts of Holy Ordinances before men, God will not be deceived or mocked; there is no putting Tricks upon him. If you will not be perswaded to your Duty, he knows the *reason*, and 'tis in vain to make *false flourishes*, and *excuses*. Yea, some mens *pretences* are so openly untrue, and gross, that they cannot as much as hope to *deceive men* by them. Every one sees the *falsehood* and *lying* of their *Allegations*, all their *Actions* proclaim that they do not themselves *believe* or *mean* any thing that they say; and yet they have the *prodigious impudence* to *lye* on in the *face* of God, and Conscience, and Men. So *fear'd* and *hardned* are some in their *perverseness* and *hypocrisie*, and act at that *rate*, as if it were a *Play-game*, and *sport of wit* to shew how many ways they had
to

to evade their Duty, with some *shew of reason*. Sirs, when this *vile sort of evil men* have the Forehead to *pretend Religion*, they become the most *mischievous Miscreants* upon earth; and the fittest Instruments that Satan can desire or use for the Affairs of his Kingdom. But no more of them now.

Friends, I am exceeding troubled to see how *undutiful to God*; and how *unkind to themselves*, how *foolish and unreasonable* many men are, when they seek for *little occasions* to pretend, as *reasons* against the *greatest and most important Duties*; when that which would excuse *nothing else*, shall excuse them unto God for a neglect of his *Worship*, in the greatest Instances of it: An *aching Finger*, a few *Drops of Rain*, the *cold Air*, a Fit of *Drowsiness*, an *impertinent Visit*, or such like *Trifles*, are enough to be pleaded for *absence* from the House of God, and Holy Communion with him. My Wife was not at home, or she
was

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was busie, my Childs head ake'd;
 or I had Friends to Dine with me,
 therefore *I could not be at the Sacra-
 ment.* Therefore *I could not!* For
 shame false man! offer such *excuse*
 to thy Master, or thy Prince,
 when he commands and expects
 thine attendance; see how he will
 take them from thee: Yea, offer such
 but to thine *Equal*, that waits for
 thee on Affairs of Moment, and try
 how kindly he will receive the
 disappointment on such grounds.
 Dost thou use to say, *I could not*
go out to Market to buy Necessa-
ries, because 'twas cold Weather; *I*
could not go to Dinner to my kind
Neighbour next door, that invited
me, because I had prick'd my Fin-
ger? Are such pretences too *tri-*
fling to be used on such ordina-
 ry occasions, and are they e-
 nough for the *Greatest*? will they
 serve to excuse thy neglect of
 feeding thy Soul with the bread of
 Life, and thy making Provision for
 Eternity? Will they answer for
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thy not waiting on the Lord, the Lord of Life and Glory, when he invited thee to the Feast of Love at the House of Banquets? What thoughts hast thou of the *Privileges* of the Gospel, the *Communion* of Saints, the *peace* of Conscience, the *joyes* of the Holy Ghost, the *fore-tastes* of Glory; what, I say, dost thou think of these, if they have not so much power with thee as the most acknowledged trifles? With how much *less* respect and devotion dost thou serve God, than wicked men do the Devil and their Lusts? When they invite to jolly meetings and communion in debauchery and bestial madness, do the *Blades* use to make such excuses? Are they diverted and kept off from their brutish satisfaction by such *Nothings*? certainly they could not so excuse themselves to their Lusts and vile Companions. And do you pretend to be *Worshippers* of the God of Heaven, and *Worshippers* of the best and purest sort, to be *Christians*,

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stians, and Expectants of eternal Glories and Rewards of your Services: And do you thus serve your Maker, now and then when the humour takes you, when the Devil hath no business for you, and you have nothing else to do? Are you not ashamed to confess that Religion hath so little power with you, and that every thing can do more with you, than your Duty to God, and the Interest of your Souls? Do you thus work out your salvation? Do you thus seek a Kingdom, a heavenly Kingdom, an everlasting Kingdom? Is this the work and patience of the Gospel? Is this running and striving, and fighting, and giving diligence? Is this cutting off right hands, and plucking out right eyes? Is this forsaking all, and following Christ? If there be any reason, if there be any shame, if there be any Conscience, if there be any sense of God and Religion in you, let not small matters keep you from this your greatest Duty and Concern; Make,

Make no more *such vain and self-condemning Apologies*. I know not whether it were not better for you once for all, to say you are *no Christians*; than to insist on such *shameless pretensions* for your neglects of *Christ* and his appointments. I add no more on this Head now; I pray God you may lay to heart what I have said.

C H A P. VI.

I Must now discourse with the other sort of *Refusers*, viz.

(2) *Those* that stand off upon the score of *mistakes of Conscience*. In applying my self to them, I shall consider the most weighty *Objections* that carry any colour of *Conscience* with them. And though I know many pretend *scruples* of this sort, when in earnest they are not the reasons of their neglects; yet because they are so to some, I shall take them
to

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to account. They are of two sorts:

(1) Such as hinder men only *sometimes*, and in part.

(2) Such as *wholly* obstruct their *Communion*; and are pretended as grounds, why they cannot partake with us at *any* time.

Of the first kind are *these* that follow; *viz.*

[*I would not have neglected the Holy Sacrament, but I was not in charity; such, or such a person hath abused me, and I was at odds with him; so that I durst not come.*]

To this I say, That in such an occasion, thou art *seriously*, and *impartially* to consider, whether thy displeasure were *just* or *unjust*, upon the determining of *this* will depend the state of the case. It

(1) Thy displeasure were *just*, and thy Neighbour hath done thee *wrong*, and *persists* in it without *repentance* or *reparation*; 'tis no *uncharitableness* to be displeased or
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to think amiss of him. In such a case thy *anger* is no *sin*, so long as it keeps it self within *just bounds*. Be *angry* and *sin* not, saith the Apostle, *Ephes. 4. 26.* they may be parted: And what is *no sin* cannot *unfit* us for the *Holy Communion*. For that *Ordinance* doth not oblige us to be *reconciled* in our thoughts to *wicked* and *injurious* men, while they *impenitently* continue *such*: It will indeed require us not to *revenge* our selves on them to do them *wrong*; or to desire their *ruine*, or as much as *hurt*; but not to have *kind* and *good* thoughts of them while they continue *obstinate* in their *sins* and *injustice*: otherwise it were in the *power* of every wicked person to *hinder* the good man from the *Sacrament* when he pleased. On such an occasion (I say) we may be *innocently angry*, and not only *pity* the *injurious* man, which many times is but a *proud*, though more *plausible* word to disguise our anger. And the person that is but *thus just-*
ly

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ly pleased with an Offender against God, and himself, is not *indisposed* for the *Sacrament* thereby. If this be your case any time, you ought not to permit the injury of another to do you *so much more*, as to keep you from your attendance on Christ at his *Feast of Love*.

But (2) If upon *examination* you have found, that your *anger* and *displeasure* was unjust; then the *sin*, and the *wrong* was on your part; and you ought to repent, as a *preparation* for the *Sacrament*; which indeed is the properest *Instrument* to advance your further degrees of Penitence. There you will find *considerations* and *helps* for the *cooling* of the *heats* of your *passion*; and for the allaying the *boylings* of your *rage* and *animosity*. I say, if you are convinced in your Conscience, that your *wrath* is *undeserved*, you ought to repent, and if you *do so*, you ought to use the *Holy Sacrament* for the *confirmation* and *beighting* of your *Repentance*.

So that the scruple of not being in *charity*, cannot justly keep any from the Sacrament, but *those* that know they hate their Brother without a cause, and are resolv'd to persist in that hatred; such as will not be reconciled to one that hath done them wrong, though he *repents*, and endeavours reparation, And *such*, in effect, *renounce* Christ, and declare that they expect no benefit from his *Merit*, or *Mediation*, for the obtaining *Pardon* for themselves. If this be your condition, you may well be *afraid* to come to the Holy Sacrament; and you may as well tremble to pray, *Forgive us our trespasses as we forgive them that trespass against us*. For this is directly *praying* against your selves. I hope it is not *thus* with any of you that make this exception.

But your Neighbour you think is an *evil* man, hath done you *injury*, and not *askt* your *pardon*, or sought your *amends*; you are therefore

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fore much displeased and feel great anger in your mind against him; but yet are very ready to forgive, upon his acknowledgments and desire of forgiveness. If it be after *this manner* with you, you ought not to *abstain* from the *Sacrament* for *this reason*; but rather to address your selves to it, to provide and pray that your just anger may not grow into malice and rage; that you may not be provoked to repay your Enemy one Injury for another; but that by the due use of those holy Mysteries you may be more inclined to forgiveness, when he shall be fit for it. This I think is sufficient for that Doubt.

(11) But I have so much business fallen upon me, that I have not time to prepare my self, and therefore I cannot come.

In answer to this, I shall say something that concerns 1. Business; and something, 2ly, that concerns Preparation.

(1) As to Business, Doth your
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Business afford you time to eat, and drink, and sleep, and none to fit your Souls for spiritual entertainments and converse with God?

(2) Have you any greater, have you any better business, than to prepare your selves to remember the Love of your *dear Lord*, to meet with him, to renew your Covenant with God, and to receive pledges of his pardon and his love? Do you not reckon that this is *Business*, and the most important and necessary business; and shall the greater matters give place to the less?

(3) Is not much of the Business that hinders, needless? Have you not voluntarily involv'd your self in more affairs than it was necessary you should, or than your state or station in the world requir'd? Might not some of it have been put off to some other time; or might not the time that you spend in *impertinencies* be employed in some of that business?

Ask

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Ask your Consciences these questions; and know that what ever Business you take upon you *more* than is consistent with your Duty to God, and to your Souls, *that Business is your sin*. But if your *business* were not *voluntary*, but thrown on you by *providence*, the *doing* such *necessary Business* is *Gods work*; and while you do it in his *fear*, and with an eye to his *glory*, you are doing somewhat that is a *preparation* for the Holy Sacrament, or at least *that* which doth not by any means *indispose* you for it. And hence I pass to the Answers that concern

II. *Preparation*. As to this take these two things.

(1) There are *Preparations* required to *Prayer* and *Hearing*, as well as to the *Sacrament*; *Meditation* is the Preparation for *Prayer*, and *Prayer* the preparation for *Hearing*; and I hope that notwithstanding your business you perform *these* Duties: If *not*, you are to *repent* speedily of your neglect and

and to take the *first* opportunity of the *Sacrament*, there to *confess* your *sin*, to declare your *repentance* and *resolutions* of *amendment*; to beg *pardon* for what you have *omitted*, and *Grace* to *assist* you in what you *resolve*. But if you have *perform'd* those *holy services*, then I say,

(2) That those performances joyned with *Faith* and *Repentance*, are *preparations* for the *Holy Communion*. For when we *hear*, and when we *pray*, we do the *same* thing that we do at the *Sacrament*, though not with that *solemnity*; we *remember* Christ when we *hear*, and we do the *same*, and *renew* our *Covenant* with God, when we *pray*, (in which two I have told you the nature of the *Ordinance* consists;) so that these *acts* are *dispositions* and *preparations* for that which is the more *solemn* performance. A *good life* in the discharge of our duties towards God and man, is an *habitual* and *constant* preparation for the *Sacrament*; and a true *Christian*

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is

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is always ready and prepared to remember *Christ*, and to confirm the *Covenant* whereby he is a Christian. It is indeed very fit, that we should take some time before we approach the Lords Table, to call together into our thoughts the several great Instances of the Love of our dear Saviour, which we are to remember there: what particular sins we have to confess, and to resolve and covenant against; what Graces we want, and are more especially to implore. These things we should do, but they are not works that will require much labour or time, if we have been constant in the other preparatory Duties of *Meditation*, *Prayer*, and *Hearing*; for they do habituate such thoughts and resolutions to the Souls of good men. But if thy case be such that thou hast been an evil man; and negligent of all spiritual duty; but art now sensible of thy sin, and desirous to reform; that sense and those desires of amendment (if they are sincere, and if thou under-

understandest the *nature* of the *Sacrament*, and Gods *Covenant* that is sealed by it) are thy *preparations*. The *more time* thou takest, and the *more Prayers* and *Thoughts* thou imployest with other means, to make the *sense* of sin *deep*, and the *desires* of Reformation *intense* and *great*, the *more* thou art *prepared*, and the better things are like to succeed with thee. But if thy *preparations* are of a *lower*, and more imperfect degree (if of the *true kind*) thou oughtest *not therefore* to *abstain*; God will *pardon* thy *infirmities*, and *accept* of thy *sincerity*, and *strengthen* thee *so*, that thou shalt be *better prepared* against *another opportunity*, if thou art not wanting to thy self. But as to *this*, I may have occasion to speak more under the next Head; *viz.*

(11) To consider the *Scruples* of *Conscience*, that keep some off wholly from *publick Communion*. They are either of *such* as refrain, because (1) they think themselves

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unworthy, or (2) of those that do it, because they think *others unworthy*, (3) of such as refuse on the opinion, that the *way of administration* is *unworthy*. Most of the considerable and usual doubts will fall under one or other of *these*. I begin with those of the *first* sort.

(1) We would come to the Holy Communion, but alas we are not *worthy* of so great an honour and privilege; and we are afraid to come, because we hear, that *he that eats and drinks unworthily, eats and drinks his own damnation*.

To *this*, proposed thus in the general, I answer, (1) We are also *unworthy* of *common Mercies*, of *Meat*, and *Drink*, and *Raiment*; and of the more usual *spiritual Mercies*, that God should *speak* unto us, or that *we* should be permitted to *speak* unto *him*; shall we therefore *starve* our selves, and go *naked*? shall we therefore refuse to *hear*, and *pray*? In the *Sacrament* there is *something* of *duty*, and *something* of

of *priviledge*; when we are commanded to do a duty *reasonable* and *just*, shall we refuse because we are *unworthy*? when we are invited unto a Benefit *great* and *free*, and *necessary*, shall we resist it because we are not *worthy*? To do this is to render our selves *more undeserving*. When God offers Favours, we *may* and *ought* to accept, though we are *unworthy* of them.

(2) All men are *unworthy* in the sense of the Law. *Every man in his best estate is altogether vanity*, Psalm 39. 5. *We are all an unclean thing, and our righteousness is as filthy rags*, Isa. 64. 6. The meaning is, all men are Sinners, and their best services are imperfect and polluted. There is none *righteous*, no not one, according to the strictness and severity of the Law, which requires unfeigning obedience. This *unworthiness* then is not a reason why thou shouldst refrain; yea,

(3) If thou art *sensible* of this thine *unworthiness*, and desirous to

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be made *more worthy*, thou oughtest for *that reason* to come. 'Tis *such* that Christ invites: Come unto me all ye that are weary and heavy laden, and I will give you rest, Matth. 11. 28. He came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance, Matth. 9. 19. Ho every man that thirsteth come—Isa. 55. 1. The Spirit and the Bride say come, and let him that is a thirst come.—Rev. 22. 17. Sense of spiritual wants, and desire of spiritual supplies, is part of Gospel-worthiness; and that which gives a right to the Sacrament. Thy being an unworthy Sinner, is not a reason why thou shouldst refrain, except thou art obstinately resolv'd to continue so. The Beggar is never the more unworthy of an Alms, because he is in rags and great misery; nor the sick man the more unworthy of the care and pains of a Physician, because his Disease is great and violent upon him. If indeed the Beggar loves and chuseth want, and scorns charity; if the Patient hates and re-

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sists the Physician and his applications; in such a case the one is unworthy of relief, and the other of the means of health. If this be thy case in *Spirituals*, thou art *unworthy*; and till thou art of another temper, I would not perswade thy coming. But if on the other hand, thou art *sensible* of thy *sins*, and *desirous* of *pardon* and *grace* to reform, thou hast the *qualification* that renders thee one that *may* and *ought* to *come*: and thou art *worthy* as a *Beggar* is of an *alms*, or the *Sick* of *Physick*: that is, thou *wantest* it, and *Christ* invites thee to come, and to receive *supplies* suitable to thy wants. So that if it be *thus* with thee, the sentence of the Apostle pronounced on him that *eats and drinks unworthily* will not concern thee.

But the Doubter presseth the matter more *particularly*; *Knowledge*, *Faith*, and *Repentance* are *necessary* to this *worthiness*: But I have *no knowledge*, I *cannot believe*, I *cannot repent*; and therefore *am not worthy*.]

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I shall speak to these *distinctly*, and apart.

As to what concerns, (1) **Know-
ledg**, I propose *these* things.

(1) Perhaps thou art mistaken in the *Degrees of Knowledge* that are necessary. It is *not necessary* that thou shouldst have knowledge in *dee* and *controversial* Points; no, nor yet in many *doctrinal Op-
nions* about Religion, that are *less speculative* and *nice*: It is *not necessary* that thou shouldst be acquainted with the *disputed* matters about the *Sacrament*, or be able to discourse largely upon the Subject. No, *Necessary knowledge is in few things*, and *those practical*. If therefore thou art instructed in the main *plain* Points of *Christian Do-
ctrine*, and in the *great Rules of Christian Life*; if thou understandest the *Sacrament* to be a *Remembrance* of Christ, and a *confirming* our *Co-
venant* with God; and knowest those *easy* things I have before set down about

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about it: There is no reason then why thou shouldst plead *ignorance* in barr to thy *Duty* and *Priviledge*. But

(2) If thou art *really ignorant* in those plain things, thy ignorance is *inexcusable*; 'tis a great *sin*, and an argument of *prodigious carelesness* and *neglect*. For no one can want *capacity* to know things so easie, and no one can want *opportunity* to know things so *common*, and no one can plead excuse for not endeavouring to know things so *necessary*. If *this* then be thy case, repent of thy *stupidity* and *carelesness* that occasioned thy ignorance, and apply thy self presently to thy *Spiritual Guide*, or some honest knowing Neighbour, to instruct thee in those great and necessary matters. Be afraid and ashamed to live a day longer in such dangerous darkness amidst so much clear light: And till thou hast got out of this state of wilful blindness, meddle not with Holy Mysteries. But this, E. 3. I hope,

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I hope, is the condition but of very few of you: Those that make the Objection, are mostly such as do it upon the *former* mistake, which I have endeavoured to rectifie.

(II) Want of *faith* is pleaded. And to this scruple I say,

(1) Perhaps thou art *out*, and hast been *mis-taught* in the Doctrine of *Faith*. It may be thou takest *Faith* to be an *assurance* of Salvation; or supposest that it requires thy assent to *many* Principles, and *such* as are *unreasonable*, or *doubtful*; or perhaps thy mind hath been *confounded* by *phrases*, and *various*, *metaphorical*, and *dark* representations of *Faith*; so that thou dost not so much as know *what it is*, or *wherein it consists*. These all have been, and often are the cases of many well-disposed Christians. The good man is not absolutely *assured* of his Salvation; or he *doubts* sometimes of many *Doctrines* and *Opinions* that he hath been taught to believe as *Fundamentals*,

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mentals; or his understanding is *confused* by variety of *odd notions*; and therefore he thinks he hath not *Faith*, and dares not approach the *Holy Table*. If any of these be thy condition, rectifie thy *Thoughts*, and thou wilt be rid of thy vain *Fears*: Consider the matter *freely*; look on it in the *Light of Scripture* and *Reason*, and thou wilt find, that *those conceits* about *Faith* were *groundless*. Lay this down for certain, that the *plainest and most obvious account* of it is truest; For God would not make *that* the great condition of the Gospel, which is *difficult* to understand.

Now the *plain, scriptural, rational* Notion is *this*, *Faith* in the general is the *belief* of a *Proposition affirmed*; *Divine Faith*, the belief of something upon a *Divine Testimony*; *Gospel saving Faith* is such a *belief* of *Divine Testimony*, as hath influence upon the *heart and practice*, and conforms them unto it. If now we believe other *Testimonies*, but not
that

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that which God hath given us by, and of his Son, our Faith is meerly humane, and we have nothing to do with the *Holy Sacrament*. If we believe the Revelations of God in the Gospel, but that belief hath not yet had such power upon our affections and conversations as it ought, and as we desire: In this case we may, and 'tis our duty to come to the Lords Table, to profess that degree of Faith which we have, and to pray for more; that it may be made so strong and lively, as to transform our hearts, and all our powers into the likeness of it, and into his likeness who is the Author and Finisher of our Faith. And finally, if our faith hath already had this effect upon us, we are to come to the Sacrament for further confirmation of it. This is the short and plain account of the matter, and if I should run it out into further discourse, this part would be disproportioned to the rest. If my brevity leave any of you unsatisfied

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fied in *this*, or any other things belonging to my Subject, I am at hand, willing and ready to give you further satisfaction. But

(2) It may be the *weakness* and *imperfection* of thy Faith makes thee think thou hast *none*. In this case ask thy self the question: Do I think that *Christ Jesus* was an *Impostor*, and that the *Gospel* is a *Fable*? Thou *startlest* and *abhorrest* these thoughts: Hence thou mayest be assured that thou hast *some degree of Faith*. But *that* (it may be) is *very small and low*: Be *that* the case; Ask thy self then again, whether thou hast any *desire* that thy *weak Faith* should be *strengthened*, and thy *imperfect Faith* should be *improved* to greater and nobler measures? If thou art a person fit to be dealt with under this Head of *Conscience*, it is *thus* with thee; thou art *sorry* for *this imperfection*, and *desirous* of *growth and improvement*: And if *so*, apply thyself to the *Holy Sacrament*, as to the

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the proper means of growth, and remedy of thy imperfections. Here thy Faith will be exercised, and by exercise it will be felt; so that thy doubts will be cleared: Experience will assure thee. And how thy Faith will by the use of this Ordinance, be quickned and advanced, I have shewn already. Thus to the Objection from the supposed want of Faith. But

(III) The good man thinks that he wants **Repentance** too: He cannot *repent* he saith, and therefore is not worthy. In answer, I take notice that,

In *Repentance* two things are considerable, viz. 1. *Sorrow* for sin, and 2. *Turning* from it to a life of Holiness and Vertue.

1. It may be thy *sorrow* is not so *intense* and *great* as thou thinkest is fit and suitable to such an occasion: Thou canst not weep and grieve *so much* for thy sin as the evils of it require; and yet thou mayest not wholly want the Grace
of

of Repentance. *All* indeed are *Sinners*, and *all* must *repent*: But men are *Sinners* in *different* measures and degrees of guilt; and their sorrow and humiliations will likewise be *different*. Deeper Convictions and greater Agonies and Pangs of Sorrow may be expected from them whose sins have been *capital* and *notorious*, than from those others whose lives have been more *civil*, and less tainted with *ranting* Enormities. It may be then thy Education hath been sober, and thy Inclinations not bent towards the grosser Vices; thou hast not committed any *horrid* Crimes, or *such* sins as look *gastly* in thy Conscience; and consequently thy Conversion hath not those *terrors*, and that *dread* in it, those melting sorrows, and violent expressions of grief that thou observest in some others. Though it be *thus*, thou hast no reason to be discouraged, if thy sorrow be *so much* as to engage thee to *humble* thy self before God, sincerely

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cerely to beg *grace* and *forgiveness*, and, to obtain from thee *hatred* of thy sins, and resolutions against them; that *sorrow* of thine is *godly sorrow*, and part of true *repentance*, though it have not the greatest *degrees* of *vehemence*: These may be wanting on another account also in them that are truly penitent; their *temper* may be more *cold*, and their *passions* *calmer* than others are; and on this score their *resentments* less notable, and the expressions of them less eager: So that *violences* in *sorrow* are not always arguments of *true repentance*, nor the absence of them a sign of *impenitency* and *hardness*. If thou art so sensible of sin as to desire and endeavour to overcome and forsake it, thou art a *Penitent* in part, and thou oughtest to come to the Sacrament for the strengthening of that sense, and to gain more assistance and more resolution to subdue thy sin. And if there be any real *defect* in thy sorrow, repair thither, that it may be

awakened, and excited to degrees more *becoming* and *effective*.

But (2) The Objection presseth as to the *other* part of *Repentance*. *I cannot leave my sin*, and therefore dare not approach the *Holy Mystery*. But dost thou *desire* it? dost thou *endeavour* it? If so, though thy desires are imperfect, and thy endeavours weak, yet it is thy duty to present thy self at the *Holy Table*. There thou mayest expect to have thy *Desires* *increast*, and thy *Endeavours* *heightned* and *encouraged*. And how both the former act of *Repentance*, which is *Sorrow*, and this of *aversation*, are promoted by the *Sacrament*, I have particularly shewn in the former Periods, to which I refer you for your fuller Answer to this and such like Objections.

Thus of the *Scruples* that arise from the first Head, the apprehension of our own *unworthiness*. I descend to another.

(II) Some

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(11) Some abstain from the *Sacrament* because of the **Unworthiness of Others**; *wicked men* are admitted, and they will not have *communion* with *such*. Yea, they are commanded to have no *fellowship* with them, *Ephes. 5. 11.* and to *come out from among them*, *2 Cor. 6. 17.*

For the answering this, I propose these things to be considered.

(1) Hast thou taken the *Method* of our *Saviour*, *Matth. 18. 15.* with the Sinner, from whose communion thou thinkest thou must withdraw? Hast thou *privately* told him of his Faults? Hast thou admonisht him before *Witnesses*? Hast thou told the *Church*? If so thou hast done, and he persist still in his wickedness, he will no doubt be *legally* excluded from *Christian Communion*; and so the foundation of thy doubt will be taken off.

(2) How art thou *sure*, when thou seest those thou callest *wicked* come to the *Sacrament*, that they do

do not *repent* of their wickedness, and come to the holy Ordinance to *beg pardon* for their sins, and *strength* against them? How dost thou know that they are not come to *bind* themselves by deep resolutions, and sacred Vows, to a *spiritual warfare*, and a new *obedience*? Their coming makes *profession* of such *designs* and *resolutions*, and how dost thou know that *that profession* is *insincere*? Hast thou a way of prying into the heart?

But the man returns to his sins as soon as he hath done, and hence thou wilt say, thou knowest his *hypocrisie*. This indeed were something, if it could be certainly *foreseen*; but how he will demean himself after the *Sacrament*, thou canst not *foretel*; This may have more effect upon him than *former Sacraments* have had. This I say, may be, and *charity thinketh no evil*, but *believeth all things*, *hopeth all things*, 1 Cor. 13. Or, if it now again prove otherwise, it is no certain evidence
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that the man *only* made *pretence* and *shew*; he might *then* *mean* and *design* *truly* and *well*; but temptations and his *lusts* were *too strong* for him, and carried him away against all his endeavours and resolutions.

(3) Thou performest other sacred duties, in which thou *remembrest* Christ, and hast *Communion* with God, in the *company* of *evil men*. Thou joynest in *hearing*, and *publick prayers* with *such*; and why mayest thou not be *present* at the *Sacrament* with them?

If it be pretended as a *reason* of *difference*, That *hearing* the Word, and *Prayer*, are *converting Ordinances*, but the *Sacrament* is *not so*: I ask thee then, whether thou meanest by [*converting*] a *turning* men from *open Infidelity* to the *Profession* of the *Christian Faith*, and the *owning* of *Christian Vertues*? or only the *turning* those that *profess* this *Faith* and *Religion* before, to the *practice* of them? If thou intendest

tendest the *former*, the *Sacrament* indeed is *no converting Ordinance*; nor are the *Word* and *Prayer* ordinarily used for *such* purposes among us, where the Gospel is already generally profest: And thou dost not bear the company of the wicked of which we speak in the places of public worship, upon any *such* expectation.

But if by *converting Ordinance*, thou meanest (as is most likely) such a one as God useth as a *means* to cause men professing the Name of Christ to *depart from iniquity*, to *turn from sin to holiness*, and from the *power of Satan unto God*; I see no reason why any should think, or say, that the *Sacrament* is *no converting Ordinance*.

If it be not, either 'tis because the *Sacrament* is *no proper means*, or because God *will not concur* by his *Grace* with it. *Neither of these* can be said with any shew of reason: Not the *former*; for why should not the *solemn remembrance*
of

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of *Christ*, and the *Consideration* of what he hath *done* and *suffered*, be a *means* for the *killing* of *sin*, which he came to *destroy*, and the *promoting holiness*, which he *lived* and *died* to *advance*? yea, what can be supposed more *likely* and *powerful* for the *promoting* of *that blessed purpose*? why should not the *sign* and *seal* of *God's gracious Covenant* to give *pardon* and *eternal Glory* to all that forsake their sins, and live an *holy life*, be a *fit Instrument* to *provoke* those that understand it, to *renounce* their *sins*, and to *devote* themselves unto *holiness*? why should not that *solemn, sacred engagement*, that all that know what they do lay on themselves at the *Sacrament*, to *endeavour* to *depart* from every *known evil*, and to *practice* every *known duty*, be a *means* to oblige them to it? Certainly there is nothing that in the *nature* of the *thing*, seems to be a more *likely instrument* to convert men from a *life of sin*, to a *life of holiness*; than the
sacred

sacred remembrance of our Lord at his Table. So that if this *Ordinance* be not *converting*, it must be, because God will not concur by his *Grace* in it : But whoever saith that, speaks what he cannot know, and cannot prove ; he talks without book, and against it ; and is so extravagant in his Assertion, that it would be folly to attempt the confuting of him.

This I have said on this occasion, not to engage in a *Controversie*, but to clear a matter of *Christian practice*. And the very Root of this Objection lies in this conceit, That the *Sacrament* is not a *converting Ordinance* ; For which there is nothing but *Fancy*, and the bare sayings of some mistaken men. But now, if as I have proved, the *Sacrament* may be, and is an *Instrument to Conversion* ; then, why should any refrain, because evil men are admitted to it ?

(4) If wicked men come to the *Sacrament* that are not prepared for

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for it, their *unpreparedness* is *their sin*, and they shall answer for it: But we ought not *therefore* to neglect *our duty*, because *they* have omitted *theirs*. We may, and we ought to advise, and admonish them to prepare themselves for the Ordinance before they come to it: If they will not follow our brotherly admonition, we cannot help it; we have done what we can to render them more *worthy*, and their sin shall not be laid to our *charge*. To *prepare our selves* for the *Holy Communion*, and to address our selves unto it, *is that* which we are sure concerns us; If we neglect, 'tis *our sin*, and *other mens sins* will not excuse us. *Their sinning in one kind*, should be no reason why we should *sin* in another. There is no reason that we should starve our selves, because others take the bread that belongs not to them.

(5) If we are *worthy Communicants*, and others receive *unworthily*, They have *no Communion* with

us,

us, nor we with them: They only eat bread, and drink wine; but we partake of the mystical body and blood of our Lord. Our Communion is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ, and with the Faithful, worthy Receivers; but the unworthy partake neither with us nor them. If an Ape leap upon the Table, and eat of the bread where Friends are met at an entertainment, Is he therefore a Guest? Is he one of the Company? If writings are to be mutually sealed there among the Friends, and that Creature catcheth up the Seal, and doth as the Covenanters do, is he therefore a party? He doth the same action, but not with the same designs and ends; and these make the communion. The case is thus in reference to those ungodly men that intrude to the Sacrament; and the pious Communicants have no reason to think themselves concern'd in their company. Their bodies are together, but their spirits act and move different ways.

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ways. The *Communion* is *spiritual*; and only those that receive as they *ought* have *fellowship* with *Christ*, and with one another. And this were enough to answer *that* Part of the objection also that is taken from *Scripture*; where we are forbid to have *fellowship* with wicked men. But I add,

(6) When Christians are prohibited wicked *Fellowship*, *Eph. 5. 11.* It is evident that the prohibition concerns *heathen mysteries*, which are there call'd the *unfruitful works of darkness*, because they were used in *close recesses*; and *v. 12.* the Apostle saith, *It is a shame to speak of those things that are done of them in secret.* Christians were not to *communicate* with the *Heathens* in their *abominable Mysteries*: No, nor may they partake with wicked men in any *action of vice*, nor make them their *bosome friends*, nor be concerned with them in *other matters* more than needs; especially if they are *openly prophane*, and *obstinately* un-

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ungodly. But it doth not therefore follow, that they must forsake their Lords Table, and the most solemn expressions of duty to him, because evil men *intrudingly* present themselves unto it.

And whereas Christians are commanded to *come out from among them, and to be separate*, 2 Cor. 6. 17. 'Tis plain, that the persons they are required to separate from were *Heathens* and *Idolaters*: For they are called *Unbelievers*, v. 14. *Infidels*, v. 15. And that they were *Idolaters*, is intimated *vers.* 16. *what agreement hath the Temple of God with Idols?* whence it follows, *wherefore come out from amongst them.* So that this place doth not concern the present business; Christians were to *separate* from the Worship of *Heathen Idolaters*, but it doth by no means follow hence that they must forsake the *true Christian Worship*, because *evil men* (who yet profess Christ) afford their presence at it.

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And this may suffice for Answer to the Objections taken from the *unworthiness* of others that are admitted in *mixt* Communion.

Lastly, The *unworthiness* of our **Way** of *administration* is pretended by some, as a reason why they cannot communicate with us. I shall only speak briefly to two exceptions of this sort.

(1) The *Sacrament* is administered among us in the way of *Forms* of *Prayer*, which they think to be contrary to *spiritual* Worship. And (2) *kneeling* at it is required, which they suppose to be contrary to the first *example*; and so an irregular posture of receiving.

To the first, I say these things, (1) Worship and Prayer may be *spiritual*, where *Forms* are used: For the *spirituality* doth not consist in the *invention* of words, but in the *due intention* and *ingagement* of the soul. If we pray in *faith*, with *humility*, *self-resignation*, and *holy*
desire

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desire of the good things we pray for, we pray *in the spirit*, though by a *Form*. And if on the other hand, we express our selves in *conceiv'd prayers* never so *fluently* and *earnestly*, and have not *those dispositions* of soul upon us when we pray, our prayers are *formal*, though without a *form*. Which of these is *fittest* in it self, I shall not dispute, but only say, that *neither* is *unlawful*, but *both* have their use; and add, that *one sort* may be *properest* at *one time*, and the other sort at *another season*; so that 'tis *filly superstition* to be devoted to the opinion of *one* of them, as absolutely to condemn the *other* as *unlawfull*. In publick *Worship*, *Forms* have the advantage in securing the *gravity* and solemnity of it, and in *this* too, that the worshippers *know* what it is they joyn in: But in *secret devotions*, *conceiv'd prayers* may sometimes *suit* better with particular occasions, and may engage the affections *more*. So that either of these

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may be used, as shall best accord with the ends of Prayer. And when the publick *Authority* of the Church requires the one, we may not scruple it, though we are more *affected* with the *other*; especially, since we may in *private* take the liberty to use which of them we think fittest.

(2) *Those* that are most *against* *Forms*, pray by *them*, when they joyn with another that prays, though he do it never so much *extempore*: For the peoples minds are not concern'd in *inventing* the words they pray by; the Minister gives a *Form* to them. And if you may pray in the *Form* of a *private* person, dictated to you *suddenly*, and without *deliberation*, and which you do not know before, whether it will agree with good *sence*, or *sound doctrine*; why then may you not do it in the *forms* of the Church, compos'd by wise and reverend persons upon *mature consideration* and *advice*; especially when they are *such* as we do, or may know before
to

to be *pious* and *grave*, *sutable* to Christian *necessities*, and Christian *truths*? There is no good reason that I know to make a scruple of the *latter*, if we admit the *former*.

(II) *Kneeling* at the *Sacrament* is not agreeable to the *first example*; our Saviour administred to his Disciples *sitting*; and perhaps you fear there is something of *Popery* in the posture of *kneeling*.

I answer (I) we are not bound to a nice and punctual observance of *all the circumstances* that were in the *primitive example*: The Sacrament was first administred in the *Evening* in an *upper room*, *only* to *twelve persons*, and *those Men*, and *Ecclesiasticks*, or at least such as were *destined to be so*: But even the Objectors do not think we are obliged to act in the Sacrament strictly after the example of these particulars: and why should we suppose ourselves to be tyed in the matter of *posture*, *more* than in those *other Circumstances*, which we acknowledge

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knowledge to be of no binding nature. (2) The *posture* of those times at meals was not *sitting*, but *leaning*, according to the *then Custom* of the *Romans*. So we read *John* 21. 20. That the beloved Disciple *leaned on his masters breast at Supper*. And though the *English Translation* renders, *Luke* 22. 14. *He sate down*, and the Disciples with him; it is in conformity to our *phrase and custom*, which is *sitting*: for the word in the Original [*ἀνέμοι*] doth not imply *that posture*, but is applicable to *any other* that is used, as well as *sitting*. So that if we are *strictly tyed* to the *original posture*, we must *lean* at the Sacrament, and neither *sit* nor *kneel*. But (3) the Institution hath not bound us to either the one or the other, but left the matter to be determined by the *general Rules of Decency and Reverence*. And since the *Fathers* of the Church have commanded *kneeling*, as the posture most expressive of our *humility* and

revere-

reverence in receiving the pledges of divine Love, I see no reason why any should boggle at it; much less why they should refuse their Duty, and their Priviledge, abstain from their spiritual food, and the solemn remembrance of their dear Lord, rather than do a thing so *innocent*, so *decent*, and so *reverend*, which the Authority of the Church requires from them. He hath but little appetite to his meat, that will not eat it except he may do it in such a fashion as is agreeable to his own humour.

I, but the Objector doubts; that there is real danger, and something of *Popery* in the case; the *Papists* use *kneeling* to signify their *adoration* of the *Host*, and the *Scrupler* fears there may be some such thing in our practise. But this fear is very *uncharitable* and *groundless*, since our Church doth so *vehemently* and *constantly* declare against the *Transubstantiation* of the *Romanists*, and the *adoration* of any creature; and

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since we are always told, that *kneeling* is required for *no other* reason than to *signifie* our *humility* and *reverence* : And though the *Papists* do express *more* by that posture, yet since our Church declares, that *this* is *all* *she* intends in reverence to the *consecrated* Elements, there is no ground why any should think *more* is meant by it. *Kneeling* signifies *reverence* as well as *worship*; and the *declaration* of the person himself is enough to shew *which* of them he *intends*. But besides, though the *Papists* adore the *Bread* as the real *Body* of *Christ*, and therefore *kneel* before it, yet *that* can be no reason why we should *not* in this remembrance of our Lord *adore* himself : They kneel to him as present *corporally*; we worship him as *virtually* and *spiritually* present.

This I might urge further as a positive Argument for the *posture* of *kneeling*, over and above the use of it, as an Answer to the Objection. Thus, all acknowledge that
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Christ is to be worshipp'd. Receiving the Sacrament is the proper Worship of Christ; and kneeling is a proper signification of adoration. It follows that on this account kneeling is fit, and fittest to be used in the action of Communion. But I shall pursue this matter no further, what I have said may satisfie the modest and reasonable; and people that are set and resolv'd in their opinions, will not be satisfied with never so much more.

I should now draw to an end, but I am loath to leave you without some particular Rules of Preparation; These I shall lay down plainly and briefly in the ensuing periods.

CHAP.

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C H A P. VII.

THe Persons that are to come to the Sacrament may be distinguished into two sorts, *viz.* Either *such* as do *repent* and are *sorry* for their *Sins*, but have not yet in *any* good degree prevailed over them; or, those *other* more improved and *grown* Christians, who in considerable measure have mastered their *Sins*, and are endowed with many habits of Holiness and Virtue. The *first* sort are yet under the *Law*, *viz.* a state of *sense* and *conviction* of sin, but have not attained to the glorious *Liberty* of the *Sons of God*, or the state of power over them. But the others have arrived to that power in competent measure, so that *sin* doth not reign in their *mortal bodies*, because they are not *under the Law*, but *under Grace*. For distinction sake I call the first sort, **Bare Penitents**; the second, the **Faithful**. Now the
Prepa-

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Preparations that concern *these* are different as their states are.

I. For the *bare Penitents*, and *sorrowers* for Sin, I advise them to prepare by the *Rules* following.

(1) Endeavour to make your selves as *sensible* as you can of the *evil* of *sin*; Consider it is an *enemy* unto God, and to your own happiness; as the *basest ingratitude*, and the *greatest deformity*; as a thing to be *hated* for it self, if there were no consideration had to its *effects*: Look upon it as the *destroyer* of your *present*, as well as *future* peace and felicity; as the *enslaver* of your souls to the *Devil*, and that which *debaseth* them to the likeness and condition of *beasts*. Aggravate such considerations in your thoughts by all the circumstances that may render sin odious to you.

(2) Consider the *gracious* nature of the *Covenant* that God hath made with us in his Son; That by that *Covenant* he hath assured all true

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true *Penitents* of *pardon* of their Sins, and *strength* against them. So that be our Sins never so *many*, or so *hainous*, they will be *forgiven*, if we *repent* and turn from them; and be they never so *strong* and *violent* upon us, they may be overcome, if we accept, and use the grace that the Covenant offers to us. Represent these things duly, and frequently to your thoughts, and for the making the deeper impressions on them, collect those places of Scripture that speak so fully of the *Love* and *Merits* of God, his *readiness* to *pardon*, and *desires* of our *happiness*, the *frequent* and *free offers* of his *kindness*; His *invitations* to Sinners to come unto him, and his often *bemoanings* of their *obstinacy* and *hardness* in running from him: Consider that he sent his Son into the World to seek and to save *them that were lost*, to bring *sinners to repentance*, to take away the *sins of the World*, to deliver us from the *wrath to come*, and that the

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III

the *World* through him might be saved; I say, draw together such passages, dwell upon them in thy Meditations, till thou hast fill'd thy Soul with them. And then thou wilt find great encouragement to seek for pardon, and will be supported against those faintings, and despondencies, that the meer sense of Sin, without a Saviour, might occasion in thy Soul.

(3) After this, summon up all thy *Resolutions* against thy Sins; Consider thy *Baptismal* engagements, how just, and reasonable, and necessary they were; Resolve to confirm them by new Vows. Content not thy self with some cold and indefinite intentions of leading a new Life some time or other, but endeavour to settle in a firm, unalterable purpose of fighting against Sin, and living unto God. Do all thou canst by Reason and Religion, by the Considerations of Duty and of Interest, to fix thy soul here. And then,

(4) Be

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(4) Be earnest with God in Prayer, to give thee a fuller sight of Sin, and clearer, surer thoughts of pardoning Mercy: To present thee with more arguments to heighten thy resolutions, and to make thy soul more capable of being moved by them. I say, apply thy self unto God by Prayer, publick, private and secret prayer, Confessing thy own vileness, acknowledging his Mercies, and resolving new obedience. And being thus prepared,

(5) Look on the holy Sacrament as thy great Duty and Remedy; As that to which God calls thee, and the state and necessities of thy soul call thee; As that Ordinance in which thou art to seek and mayst expect pardon and strength, resolution, and peace. Consider this, and raise thine appetite and expectations; for they that hunger and thirst after righteousness shall be filled.

And now when thou hast exercised thy self in these acts, and the time

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time of the holy Communion approacheth, Then

(6) Imploy thy time in *awakening* and *affectionate* thoughts of Christ thy Lord. Consider the *greatness* of his *Condescension*, the *kindness* of his *Undertaking*, the *holyness* of his *Life*, the *purity* of his *Doctrine*, the *heaviness* of his *Sufferings*, the *power* of his *Resurrection*, and the *glory* of his *Ascension*. Turn thy thoughts earnestly, and often, upon *these* and *such* instances of the History of the holy Jesus, and by them dispose thy self to a befitting remembrance of him at his Table.

And (Lastly) Gather up all thy thoughts and resolutions together, *viz.* thy *apprehensions* of the *vileness* of *sin*, of the *Grace* of the *Covenant*, and the *merits* of thy *Lord*? thy *purposes* of leaving every evil way, and of renewing thy *baptismal Vows*, and say to thy self, Now is the time come that I must use *these* thoughts and resolves, that I may obtain

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obtain pardon, and strength, victory over sin, and assurance of happiness: My Lord invites me to the great representation of the evil of sin in his *own sufferings*; to see his *Body wounded*, and his *Soul made an Offering for Sin*, in the *Type of Bread broken*, and *Wine poured out*; To remember his *Conquest over Sin by Death*, and a glorious *Resurrection*; To see the *Covenant of Grace* and pardon sealed: He invites me to *these* priviledges, and calls upon me to bind my self stronger in this holy Covenant, and thereby to make my self the subject of those blessings it assures and conveys. I say, imploy thy Soul in such thoughts, and bring them with thee to the Lords Table, spread them before him *there* in humble Confessions, Supplications, and Acknowledgments, and thou mayest then expect to receive the benefit thou art seeking after.

These are Preparations for a bare Penitent, that hath yet made but little

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little progress in subduing of his Sins. And though the *highest degrees* of all these are not absolutely necessary to the coming of *such* to the Lords Table; yet the *more* they have been exercised in them, so much the *better* it is, by so much they are *more prepared*, and so much *more* they may expect of the benefits. But if your minds, that have not been used to *spiritual* things, will not fix long on *such* thoughts and Meditations: Ingage them, as far as you can; proceed in the Method prescribed with that *diligence* and *care* that becomes one that is *serious*. And then, though your preparations be *imperfect* now, they may be *more compleat* against *another season*. If thou art sensible they have been so *defective*, maintain and keep up that sense, and resolve upon it, to endeavour to fit thy self *better* for *another* Sacrament, by renewing the *same* method, which will be *easier* for thee in the *progress* than it was in the *beginning*.

As

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As for the other sort, *viz.* II. Those that have *advanced* in the conquest of their *sins*; They are to *act over all the former particulars*, that I have advised to the *bare Penitents*: For being yet *sinners*, and *imperfect*, they have need to use *that method*. And there are these few other *Directions* to be briefly added, that do further concern them.

(1) Call your selves to a *particular account* concerning your *sins*, examining *what vices* you are *most addicted to*, and *what* are the *sins* of your *tempers*, or of your *Profession* and *Calling*: when you have found *those*, exercise *particular acts* of *Repentance* upon them, and *renew* your resolutions against them. Consider, that allowance of them is inconsistent with *sincerity*, and a state of true *regeneration*; that 'tis necessary you should oppose and subdue them; and that the holy *Sacrament* is to be used as a *means* for that blessed end.

(2) Examine *what ground* you have

have got upon your sins since the last Sacrament, whether you are now more tender and fearfull of offending God than you were before; whether your inclination to any evil be more weakened and mortified? If so, take encouragement hence to go on with more Christian vigor and resolution. If not, humble yourselves for your unfruitfulness, and endeavour to dispose your souls to make a better use of the next opportunity.

(3) Inquire into the state of your souls as to your Graces; what Graces are wanting, and what are weak? which are growing, and which at a stand? and when you have found the condition of your souls as to these, then exercise your meditations upon these particulars in the Life, Doctrine, and Precepts of your Lord, whom you are to remember at his Table, that may be proper for your case. Apply your thoughts, and cares, and resolutions that way. Design and resolve to attend

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tend the holy Sacrament for the *supply* of those *wants*, and to endeavour to use it *so*, that the *needed graces* may be *obtain'd*, and the *weak ones* may be *strengthened*, that *those* that are at a *stay* may be put into *motion* forwards, and *those* that are *growing* may be *further improved*. If you thus provide, and imploy your selves in the method before remembered, you will then be meet partakers of the *holy mysteries*, and may assure your selves of the *blessings* and *advantages* which they convey.

THis Subject would have required a larger discourse, but my *present* business was principally with the *careless* and *negligent*, to whose condition I have mostly applied my self. For the *others*, that are solicitous for their souls, and desirous to be further informed about this great and important affair of *preparation*, I shall advise them to get, and carefully to read and digest two excellent

cellent Books of the Sacrament : The former called *Mensa Mystica*, or a *Discourse concerning the Sacrament of the Lords Supper*, by Dr. Simon Patrick; and the latter named the *Christian Sacrifice*, containing most excellent *Meditations and Prayers*, both *before and after the Sacrament*.

In the *first design* of this little Discourse I intended to have added some things of that sort for your use; but while I was thinking of it, my Pious, Learned, and Excellent Friend the Author, sent me one of those his last Books, the *Devotion and Piety* of which is *extraordinary*; and there is nothing that I know, fitter to *prepare your affections*, and to excite them to the noblest height of *desire and love*, than those *heavenly Meditations*? And you cannot use more *proper, judicious, or affectionate Prayers* than those he hath annexed. So that I was exceedingly glad when I saw this useful, much needed work, so incomparably

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bly well done, that there was no occasion of my doing any more in it, than earnestly to recommend that Book to your perusal. And I intreat you to get it into your Houses, and from time to time to endeavour to warm your Souls by it, when you are preparing for the Sacrament, and by it to fix you in your resolutions of living according to your engagements there, when you have attended on that blessed Ordinance.

And now, my Friends, I leave you to the blessing of God, and the consideration of what I have said. Whatever judgment may be made of it, I have this testimony that I meant it sincerely. And I shall never cease to pray, that both you and I may sincerely practice according to it.

Your faithfull Monitor and Servant,

J. G.



Postscript,

TO THE
 Citizens
 OF
 BATH.

Christian Friends,

B*Esides the Writing of this
 Book for your Use, I have
 taken what Care I could, you
 should have it in your Hands;
 G and*

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and especially those of the poorer sort that cannot buy. I was extremely satisfied to perceive so good an Effect of those Endeavours at the last solemn time of Sacraments. Such Communion have not been here since our unhappy Troubles, that unhinged all: And now give me leave to ask you ;

Did it not comfort your Hearts to see something like the former days of Charity and Peace? Is it not a blessed sight to behold a full Assembly of Christians met with one accord, to Worship Christ their Lord? Is not the Service more solemn, and are not our Hearts more raised? Are not our Devotions kindled by the Zeal of others ; and our Spirits refresht by going to the House of God in company? Is it not joyfull to see the mutual Amity of Christi-

Christians exprest there; and to joyne in full consent, in remembering our dear Lord; joyntly vowing our selves to his Service, praising him for his Love, and waiting on him for his Blessings? Is not this more like Religion and Worship, than the discouraging sight of a few, scatter'd here and there, when multitudes turn their backs upon this Feast of Divine Grace and Love? Is not this more comfortable than living in a stupid neglect of a great known Duty; and better than running into corners after fancies and unknown ways? Is not Religion more honour'd, and Peace more promoted, and Charity and Edification more advanced, by a joynt Worship of our Redeemer, than by Separations, and proud Singularities? Have not our Children and Servants

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a better Example in such a Practice ; and are they not prepared for Reverence , and a carefull sense of Religion, when they see full Congregations devoutly attending upon the Service of it ? Will not the great reproach of the Reformation be taken away by our Unanimity in Worship ; and the scandal of our coldness and want of zeal, that hath turn'd so many to the Church of Rome on the one hand, and to the Sects on the other, in great part be removed ; and our Church better secured in these dangerous days from those Enemies on both sides ?

*To these things, Sirs, if you consider, you must consent, and I beseech you to weigh seriously the Benefits that will accrue to your selves and the publick weal of the Church and Kingdom, by an Accord in Worship. As
you*

you have begun in this, I hope you will hold on, and shew that it was not only a Fit of Devotion, or any by-consideration that induced you to it, but a conviction and sense of Duty.

I have represented to you the necessity of perseverance in Religion, and the dangers of Apostacy: They that endure to the end shall be saved, Mark 13. 13. But if any man draw back, God saith, his Soul hath no pleasure in him. 'Tis a terrible saying that of the Apostle, which I wish you well to consider: It is impossible for those who were once enlightned, and have tasted of the heavenly Gift, and were made Partakers of the Holy Ghost, and have tasted the good Word of God, and the powers of the world to come, if they shall

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fall away, to renew them again to repentance: *Hebrews* 6. 4, 5, 6.

You have now solemnly confirmed your Baptismal Engagements, and sacredly vowed your selves to Christ as his Servants and Subjects; what ever imperfection there was in those beginnings, take heed you do not account them as nothing: God doth not despise the day of small things: Zech. 4. 10. You are not to be discourag'd because you feel not any great Effects at first; the progress of the Grace of God, like the growth of Plants, is often by degrees, insensible; in continuance you will find the benefit, increase of your Graces and of your Comforts: But if you leave off what you have begun,

gun, you will grow worse and worse; more hardened in sin, and more averse to spiritual Duties; you will dishonour Religion, and the holy Sacrament, more by your Apostacy, than ever you did by your former neglects: You will offend and discourage others from trying those ways which you have attempted and left; and woe be to those by whom such Offences come.

But, Sirs, I trust, you, having begun in the Spirit, will not thus end in the Flesh. You have solemnly profest your Belief in Christ, and adherence to him; hatred of your sins, and resolutions of new Obedience: and I hope you see no cause to alter your Minds: If not, in the Name and Fear of God, keep on in your Attendance on that Sacred Ordinance;

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neglect no Opportunity of meeting your Lord, professing your love, and receiving Tokens of his. The Primitive Christians did at first every Week; and our frequency in the same Duty may contribute much to the restoring that Divine Spirit of Holiness, and peace, and love, that was so eminent among those blessed Saints and Martyrs of Jesus. I wish you would afford me Occasion to deliver the Sacrament every Month (all the Year) as I do it during the Summer-season, for the sake of those pious Strangers that are willing to use spiritual, as well as natural means of health: and I should be very glad to meet more of you at such times. It would be no hindrance to your Affairs; for God and Religion are never out of a Mans way.

way. At his Table we seek, and may hope to find his Blessing; and this is necessary to the concerns of this life, as well as to those of the next.

And methinks every one that hath any sense of sin, and remorse for it, should rejoyce there is such a Remedy, and have frequent recourse to it. We fall into sin daily, and thereby wound our Consciences and lay in matter for troubles and fears: This obligeth us to repeated Acts of Repentance, and the more serious and solemn it is, the more effectual it will be, and the more comfort and peace will arise from it.

Now in the holy Sacrament we solemnly profess, confirm, and exercise our Repentance, and receive there assurance of pardon and peace with God; so that our own needs should urge

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us to frequent attendance on this sacred Duty, and to desire, and earnestly to expect the returns of it.

This, as it would ease those that are oppress'd by the burden of their sins, so would it be an excellent preservative against it: For nothing tends more to the destruction of our sins, and growth of our Graces, than often to examine our selves, to renew our Resolutions, and to implore the Divine Aid and Help: And to these Exercises the holy Sacrament engageth us; and therefore this is one of the most effectual Instruments of Reformation, and an holy Life, that we can use.

*Upon the whole, my Christian Friends, let us all repent and be heartily sorry that we
have*

have hitherto been so wanting to this great Duty, and to this Spiritual Interest; and resolve, through the Grace and Strength of God, to express our unfeigned Repentance for our former neglects, by our future diligence.

To assist your Devotions in it, I here annex some particular Prayers, which those that are not better provided, may use as there is need. These I thought very proper to be added, because I fear many perform this Duty in a cold, dead, customary manner, for want of some such Help.

And now I pray God to bless these poor Endeavours both to You and Me, and that we may be encouraged and excited by them to constancy in our Duty, and assisted by his Grace concurring with them to perform this solemn

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solemn Worship with such Sincerity and Devotion, that his Name may be glorified, and our Souls comforted with the pardon of our Sins, and peace of Conscience here, and at length attain that everlasting peace and rest that remains for good men in the Kingdom of our Lord Jesus: To whom with the Father and Holy Spirit, be Praise and Adoration henceforth and for ever. Amen.

*A Prayer at Entrance, before
the Holy Sacrament is begun.*

Most gracious Father, Thou invitest me a vile Sinner, unworthy of the least Favour, to a Spiritual Banquet, to a Feast of Love: Lord, I am come upon thy gracious call; being poor and needy, weary and heavy laden under the burthen of my sins, I come unto thee, O Lord, for relief and rest: Help me to approach these holy Mysteries with fear and reverence, deep Humility, and ardent Devotion: with an Heart full of Faith, and Love; sensible of thy infinite Goodness in sending thy Son to die for me; and of his inexpressible Love in undertaking and accomplishing the work of my Redemption; truly sorry for my manifold sins, and throughly resolv'd against them; and grant Holy Father, that hereby my Graces may be strengthened, and my sins destroyed: That I may serve thee

thee sincerely, and acceptably all the days of this mortal life, and in thy due time attain thy everlasting Kingdom, through the Merits and Mediation of Jesus Christ, my blessed Lord and Saviour, *Amen.*

A Prayer while others are Receiving.

O Lord, I praise thy Name that Thou art pleased to admit me to the Congregation of thy People, to be partaker of the Communion of Saints, and in that, to enjoy Holy Fellowship with thy self, and a comfortable Earnest of that glorious, perfect, most happy Communion thou hast given us ground to hope for in thy Kingdom: Grant, gracious Lord, that I may thankfully and joyfully entertain this Privilege, and be disposed by it to Universal Charity and Love unfeigned to these thy People, and to all Christians. And Lord help these thy Guests worthily to receive this present Token of thy
Love,

for the Lords Supper.

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Love, and make them and me such in reality and truth as we are here in this solemn Profession, thy obedient and faithfull Subjects. Let our hearts be knit to Thee and to each other, that we may henceforth live in unity and brotherly love, forgiving one another, forbearing one another, as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven us; being pitiful and courteous, ready to do good and to communicate; to distribute to the necessities of those that want, and prepared for every good work: That Gods holy Name may be glorified, our Profession adorned, Christian people edified, and our Souls comforted with the Peace of God, and peace of Conscience here, and finally rewarded with the full Enjoyment of the Love and holy Communion of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost; through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Another.

O Lord, Thou God of Love,
grant that as we thy Servants
are

Forms of Prayers

are here met in a joynt and solemn remembrance of thy Son our Lord, in obedience to his commands and holy appointment ; so all the Members of thy Church may agree in the same common profession of thy Name, and of thy Sons Religion ; performing the great Duties, and participating the main Ordinances with *one accord*, in one heart and one mind, that our Divisions being cur'd and our Animosities laid aside, the Scandals occasion'd by them may be removed, Atheism and Infidelity may be asham'd, all wickedness, *Spiritual* as well as *Carnal*, may be discountenanc'd, and true practical goodness advanced in the World : That Peace and Love, and all the blessed fruits of them, may abound, and true Religion in the power of it, may gloriously increase ; that the Professors of it may no longer contend about *Mint*, *Anise* and *Cummin*, but heartily and sincerely mind the great things of the Law ; and particularly the Law of
Love,

for the Lords Supper.

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Love, that *New Commandement*, that *we should love one another*: That we may return to the Primitive blessed temper of Holiness and Charity, and frequent Communion; that we may shew our Faith by our Works, and our Love by our Obedience; and not spend our zeal and strength in disputing, but ingage the vigour of our Affections and Resolutions in holy living, and hereby express our affectionate remembrance of Christ, and prepare our selves for that enjoyment of him, which we expect through the Merits and Mediation of that blessed Lord and Saviour. *Amen.*

*A Prayer when the Minister
draws near with the Ele-
ments.*

BLessed be thy Name, O Lord,
that I was born in a Christian
Land, and admitted to thy Church
by Baptism, and have lived to a ca-
pacity of sealing my Baptismal
Vows

Forms of Prayers

Vows in mine own person : Lord, I heartily take those Engagements upon my self ; I renounce all sins, the works of the Devil, all worldly vanities and sensual lusts : I heartily believe thy holy Religion, and sincerely profess, constantly to endeavour to obey thy Laws, and earnestly implore the assistance of thy Grace and Spirit to enable me to keep these Resolutions ; through Jesus Christ my Lord. *Amen.*

A Prayer at the receiving of the Bread.

Lord, I receive this broken Bread, the Representation of thy Body, in memory of thy wonderful Incarnation, and meritorious Sufferings, and vow by it, that I will by the Grace of God, persist in the stedfast Faith of thy most excellent Religion, and sincere Obedience to thy most holy Laws, to my lifes end. *Amen.*

Another.

Another.

Lord, I believe, help my unbelief. I take this Sign of thy Body as a Token of thy Love, and Seal of thy Promises, to obtain for me the Pardon of my Sins, and the Salvation of my Soul, upon the terms of Faith and new Obedience: Lord, I stand to my part of the Covenant, and in full assurance of Faith, I rely on thee for the accomplishment of thine: *Be it unto me according to thy word. Amen.*

Another.

Grant, O Lord, that this Bread of Life, receiv'd by me in steadfast Faith and humble Thankfulness, may refresh and nourish my Soul, and be an effectual means of the growth of my Graces, and increase of my Comforts, till I come to Life Everlasting, through Jesus Christ my Lord. *Amen.*

A Prayer at the receiving of the Cup.

Lord, I remember with all humility and gratitude the Effusion of thy precious Blood for me, and the Attonement made by it: Grant me such a sense of those Sufferings as may awaken a due abhorrence of my sins, and such an apprehension of that Propitiation, as may encourage my addresses to the Throne of Mercy for pardon and peace; and quicken my Endeavours in the ways of Repentance and holy Living, till I obtain the Blessings thou hast purchased by thy Merits, and promised in thy Gospel. *Amen.*

Another.

What manner of Love was this, that while we were Enemies Christ dyed? Lord, make me deeply sensible of this astonishing goodness; and enable me to express
my

for the Lords Supper.

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my thankfulness by a constant and intire subjection unto *Him*, who hath bought me with the inestimable price of his most precious Blood, to whom be praise and adoration, for ever, and ever. *Amen.*

Another.

Lord, wash me from my sins through that Blood which I here commemorate; that being deliver'd from the terrors of guilt and wrath, I may *serve thee without fear, in righteousness and holiness all the days of my life*, according to the Precepts of thy Gospel, which thou hast enforced by thy holy Example, and Sealed by thy meritorious Sufferings. *Amen.*

A Prayer after receiving in both kinds.

ALL Glory and praise, and Adoration be given to thee, O Lord; for all thy benefits, especially
for

Forms of Prayers

for thy Son, for his Life and Death, Resurrection and Ascension; for his Doctrine, and for his Example; for the appointment of this *Memorial Feast*; for thy gracious Invitation of poor Sinners to thy Table, and for thy admitting me, the unworthiest of them, to partake of thy Spiritual Dainties. Let me never forget this Love, or cease to remember this dear Lord; but carry the thoughts of him and it into all my affairs, that they may regulate and direct the actions of my life, to the promoting his Honour, and expressing my acknowledgments of his goodness: That so at last I may partake of his Glory, and enjoy the full manifestation of his love, through his merits and mediation, in his heavenly and everlasting Kingdom.
Amen.

Another.

O Lord, I have now once more, in confidence of thy gracious

gracious assistance, entred into a solemn resolution against my sins, to be more watchful over my ways, and to have more regard unto thy Laws. I most humbly, and penitently implore thy pardon for my manifold breaches of such sacred Vows; those at Baptism, and others since at thy Table: and now earnestly beseech thee to afford me such measures of that Grace, which thy Son hath purchased, and promised, as may be sufficient to strengthen my natural weakness, and to overcome my powerful temptations; that I may serve thee acceptably, and faithfully, all the days of my life; through Jesus Christ my Saviour. *Amen.*

Another.

O Lord, thou hast sealed to me the Covenant of thy Grace made to me in and through thy Son, and assur'd me of the Forgiveness of my Sins, the Power of thy Grace,
the

Forms of Prayers

the Light of thy Countenance, and the enjoyment of thy Love, upon the Conditions of Faith and Repentance. Lord, I most submissively praise thy Divine Majesty for this Grace, and wonderful condescension, in entring into Covenant with such a worthless Sinner; I for ever love and adore thy blessed Son, my dear Saviour, for the Merits of his Life and Death, by which he hath satisfied thy Justice, and procured this gracious Covenant. Help me, O Lord, to abound more and more in Acts of devout Praise and holy Love; and to give constant heed to the diligent and sincere performance of those reasonable Conditions which thou hast required, and I have accepted, and engaged to fulfil: That I may obtain the Effects of thy gracious Promises, through Jesus Christ my Lord. *Amen.*

F I N I S.

